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Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization

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## REPORT OF THE PREPARATORY GROUP

21-23 SEPTEMBER 2015

### SUMMARY

This information document is the narrative report on the recommendations submitted by the Preparatory Group to the Executive Board at its 197th session.

1. The Preparatory Group of the Executive Board met **from 21 to 23 September 2015 and held six (6) meetings** attended by 17 Member States designated by the Executive Board (193 EX/Decision 7 (IV)), with enhanced participation by some 25 Member States in the discussions. The Preparatory Group was chaired by Ms Mariam Y. Katagum (Federal Republic of Nigeria), and Ms Marie-Helene Ahnberg (Kingdom of Sweden) acted as Vice-Chair.
2. The terms of reference of the Preparatory Group are set out in 193 EX/Decision 7 (IV), and it is tasked with supporting the preparation of the work of the two plenary commissions of the Executive Board in their consideration of agenda items. The Preparatory Group's objective is to assist the Executive Board by highlighting major issues raised in Executive Board documents, following a debate and taking into account the responses and clarifications provided by the Director-General. The Preparatory Group identifies in its recommendations strategic issues that merit further attention and consideration by the Executive Board. The Group's recommendations to the Executive Board are contained in document 197 EX/PG/Recommendations.
3. The Preparatory Group examined twelve (12) items that were assigned to it after consultations between its Chair and the Chairs of the Executive Board, the Programme and External Relations (PX) and Finance and Administrative (FA) Commissions respectively.

#### **Item 4** *Execution of the programme adopted by the General Conference*

**Part I:** *Programme execution (197 EX/4 Part I and 197 EX/4.INF)*

**Part II:** *Budgetary situation of the Organization for 2014-2015 (37 C/5) as at 30 June 2015 (Unaudited), Budget adjustments arising from donations and special contributions received and Management Chart for Programme Execution in 2014-2015 (37 C/5 Approved). Status as at 30 June 2015 (Unaudited) (197 EX/4 Part II and 197 EX/4.INF.2)*

**Item 5** *Follow-up to decisions and resolutions adopted by the Executive Board and the General Conference at their previous session*

*Part I: Programme issues (197 EX/5 Part I and 197 EX/5.INF)*

**D.** *Activities benefitting SIDS within the Organization's programme (2014-2017) and budget (38 C/5), including an analysis of additional resource requirements*

*Part IV: Management issues (197 EX/5 Part IV, 197 EX/5 Part IV Add. and 197 EX/5.INF.2)*

**B.** *Implementation of the action plan for improved management of extrabudgetary funds*

**D.** *Invest for Efficient Delivery*

**E.** *Criteria for introducing new and maintaining existing programmes for regular and extrabudgetary programmes*

**F.** *Proposal for presenting the performance indicators (PI) and targets related to the global priorities Africa and Gender Equality*

**Item 6** *Outcomes of the World Education Forum 2015 (197 EX/6 and 197 EX/6 Add.)*

**Item 7** *UNESCO's participation in the preparations for a post-2015 development agenda (197 EX/7)*

**Item 9** *Report on the implementation of the International Decade for the Approchement of Cultures (2013-2022) (197 EX/9)*

**Item 12** *Enhancing UNESCO's Contributions to Promote Culture of Respect (197 EX/12)*

**Item 18** *Report by the Executive Board on its activities and programme implementation*

*Part II: Implementation of the current Programme and Budget (37 C/5) (197 EX/18 Part II)*

4. The Preparatory Group was assisted by the secretariats of the Programme and External Relations (PX) and Finance and Administrative (FA) Commissions of the Executive Board, represented by Ms Magdalena Landry (Secretary of the PX Commission), Ms María del Mar Marcos and Ms Anna Iglesias-Morel; and Mr Sachin Bhatt (Secretary of the FA Commission), Ms Emily Stirnemann and Ms Olive Ugo-Nlemadim, respectively.

**Item 4, Part I: Programme execution (197 EX/4 Part I and 197 EX/4.INF)**

5. The Chair of the Preparatory Group when introducing the item recalled that the Executive Board at its 195th session held substantive debates on the EX/4 document, and that recommendations on its future contents, format and cycle were detailed in 195 EX/Decision 4 Part V. In particular, she specified that Members of the Executive Board had introduced the Programme Implementation Report (PIR) to be presented at every spring session of the Executive Board beginning with the 196th session and the Strategic Result Report (SRR) to be presented every four years. Consequently, SISTER Online Report is presented at this 197th session. The Chair drew attention of the Group to the fact that most of C/5 expected results were considered today "On track" to be achieved by the end of the biennium.

6. Member States considered that the document represented a significant step forward in being clearer and focused by presenting detailed information on achievements and challenges by

expected result and responding to the basic questions raised by Member States on programme implementation.

7. Need for further reflection may be required regarding actions to be undertaken by Executive Board Members possibly through the better identification of challenges and of mitigating measures. Members also emphasized that the Secretariat should not avoid indicating delays in implementation along with information on their causes, challenges and proposed remedial actions.

8. Some Members also highlighted that there seems to be significant underspending in some programme activities which at the same time are indicated as “on track”, and that further harmonization between Part I and Part II of the EX/4 document was called for, linking more closely programme achievements and spending.

9. While the Report proved very useful and helpful in understanding the Organization’s achievements, a Member questioned whether the excessive length of the report was necessary and proportionate to the task.

10. The representative of the Director-General acknowledged that while the document was of quality and of interest, the Secretariat had a tendency to report mostly on positive aspects of programme implementation. He recognized that a change of culture regarding reporting was required in that regard. He further indicated that efforts would be made in the coming months to review and reduce, where feasible, the reporting information required in the system and consequently the length of the EX/4 Part I Report.

11. As regards the work of the United Nations Secretary-General’s Scientific Advisory Board (SAB), a Member State asked whether the Member States might be given a list of the policy briefs elaborated by the SAB, both those pending and currently available. He also expressed the hope that the discussion of this agenda item during the Executive Board would focus on ensuring of the impact of the SAB at country level.

12. In her response, the representative of the Director-General informed that detailed information on the work and deliverables of the SAB was available on the dedicated website ([www.unsgsab.org](http://www.unsgsab.org)) and that the Secretariat would provide the Permanent Delegations with the internet address to directly access the list of policy briefs produced by the SAB, as well as of the events attended by the SAB members. She further explained that, in view of the fact that SAB was primarily advising the United Nations Secretary-General and the United Nations system, it would probably be difficult to assess how this could trickle down to country level impact.

13. Clarification was sought with regard to the implementation of the programme of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) and on reasons for two expected results being reported as being only “Partly on track”. In his reply, the Representative of the Director-General clarified that the concerns expressed were related to the implementation of Expected Results 4 and 6. The problem was not due to the budget, but to the complexity of the activity and the Science. He underlined that the completion of the Global Ocean Science Report (GOSR) required a major effort and that responses from several Member States on the GOSR questionnaire were still expected. This report would be a semi-annual one and would provide a true benchmark of the state of ocean science. As far as the Expected Result 6 is concerned, IOC has made significant efforts in capacity development, however certain regional discrepancies exist such as natural pollution issues in some Caribbean Member States, which would require additional attention.

**14. Following the discussions, the Preparatory Group decided to draw the attention of the Executive Board to the following main points:**

- **Improvements were noted in the content and presentation of the 197 EX/4 Part I thus responding to the recommendations of Member States in this regard.**

- **The length of the document and level of detail are of concern and raise the question about the necessity of such an extensive biannual reporting.**
- **The overall “fully on track” status of implementation appears inconsistent with realities of programme implementation and constraints resulting from the current financial situation and it was indicated that the Secretariat should not refrain from reporting on difficulties, challenges, delays and obstacles in programme implementation.**
- **There is need for harmonization between reporting on programme implementation and on the related expenditure; Member States underlined that there remains a gap between reporting on Part I and Part II.**
- **A list of available and pending policy briefs emanating from the work of the United Nations Scientific Advisory Board was requested.**

**Item 4, Part II: *Budgetary situation of the Organization for 2014-2015 (37 C/5) as at 30 June 2015 (Unaudited), Budget adjustments arising from donations and special contributions received and Management Chart for Programme Execution in 2014-2015 (37 C/5 Approved). Status as at 30 June 2015 (Unaudited) (197 EX/4 Part II and 197 EX/4.INF.2)***

15. The representative of the Director-General presented document 197 EX/4 Part II, summarizing the main points including the decisions to be taken by the Board. She reported total resources for this biennium (2014-2015) of \$1.04 billion of which 49% is financed by Member States' assessed contributions. The Regular Programme includes \$20 million of donations of which \$4.3 million is allocated from the Emergency Fund. She elaborated on the transfers within 2% of the appropriation resolution namely, the transfers (i) to BSP to finance the participation of field offices in the joint United Nations programming exercise at the country level (ii) to BFM to finance training of field offices' programme specialists and AO staff on financial management, resource mobilization and other areas focused on accelerating programme implementation and (iii) to support regional activities in the domain of Culture.

16. Member States took good note that the budget deficit of \$10.8 million was considered eliminated and raised the following issues:

17. **On the use of Part V of the budget:** [Several Member States clarified that it was not the intention of the 196 EX decisions to prevent use of Part V for budgeted anticipated cost increases. Member States never forbade the Secretariat to make transfers from Part V of the budget. What was questioned was why some anticipated costs were covered by other parts of the budget. The issue raised by the Representative of the Director-General regarding the unfunded risks of approximately \$10 million each biennium was queried as to whether Part V could be considered as a reserve for such costs.

18. **On the management of risks, reallocation of savings and transfers between lines beyond 2% of the initial appropriation line:** The representative of the Director-General indicated that although it was certain that SC, CLT, ERI and KMI would require transfers of more than 2%; it was only possible to determine the impact of actual staff costs at the closure of the accounts. This is because, as usually experienced in the past, the final figures depend on the amount of staff entitlements that would materialize in each appropriation line and lead to the differential between the actual expenditures vs. the standard costs.

19. In response to a question raised on **the reallocation of forecast savings** that had yet to materialize, the representative of the Director-General indicated that funds should be allocated as early as possible in order to allow Sectors the needed time to plan and implement their activities.

20. A query was also raised on the reasons for a specific funding for IESALC and it was clarified that a deficit had arisen following substantial inflationary increases in staff costs (backdated to January 2015) and the implementation of the 196 EX decision which required a restructuring of the Institute in order to remain within funds available in the 38 C/5.

21. In response to a further query on paragraph 30 of the document, it was noted that this referred to transfers to reserves proposed by the Headquarters Committee and for the ASHI liability. It was clarified that while the approval of the General Conference was being sought in principle, the actual values could only be determined at the closure of the biennium in the context of the overall expenditure position.

22. **Regarding the Emergency Fund** and the amounts stated in Table 6 of EX197/4.INF.2, it was duly noted that the Emergency Fund was used to cover two main parts – i.e. \$24 million was granted as allocations for projects and \$42 M was used to cover the deficit in 2012-2013 and that the balance was \$12.3 million of which \$11 million was the subject of the 196 EX decision to finance the 38 C/5 expenditure plan.

23. **Clarification on the recommendation of the Executive Board to the General Conference to adopt an amendment to the appropriation resolution to ensure that commitments entered into during 2014-2015 remain binding and may be paid in 2016 according to UNESCO rules and regulations:** In response to questions from Member States on the advisability of a retroactive amendment to the 37 C/5 appropriation resolution, the representative of the Director-General explained that the authority to commit funds and pay them in the subsequent period is embedded in the financial regulations. The Secretariat recalled that the customary clause was inadvertently omitted at the time of the drafting of the 37 C/5 expenditure plan. In the absence of such an amendment, the Secretariat would either have to cancel legal commitments arising this biennium where payment could fall after 31 December 2015 and face resultant legal consequences; or costs would have to be met from the 38 C/5. She further clarified that while in the past such commitments were limited to the subsequent calendar year, efforts are also been made to tighten the delivery period to three months in order to accelerate payment of commitments. Member States underlined the fact that the Appropriation Resolution could only be amended by the General Conference.

24. **On the Lapse Factor and the vacancy rate:** A number of Member States noted that the current overall “vacancy rate” of the post structure of the Organization was reported at around 10%, and raised questions on its relation with the 5% lapse factor which is applied to the Draft 38 C/5 (2016-2017). The Representative of the Director-General recalled that the definitions of “lapse factor” and “vacancy rate” were not the same, i.e., that the vacancy rate refers to the actual number of vacant posts at a given time, whereas the lapse factor is a budgetary target rate of vacancy applicable to the future staff cost budget taking into account the need for hiring temporary assistants to cover the function of vacant posts. The lapse factor is therefore set at a lower rate than the forecasted vacancy rate. Responding to a query on the Vacancy Rate, the Representative of the Director-General indicated that a decrease was not anticipated in the coming months, taking into account the new vacancies arising from the Voluntary Separation Programme, and given that the majority of vacancies (notably in the Professional category) are filled internally, thereby generating new vacancies. The projection set out in preparation of the 38 C/5 was of a vacancy rate of 9 % by the end of 2017. It is to be noted that the relevant information on this is available in the document from the Budget Orientation Debate Report (196 EX/15.INF.3) and the External Auditor’s Report on Budgetary Techniques (196 EX/15.INF Rev.) from the 196th Executive Board session.

25. **Clarification of authority for reallocation of RP Funds:** Questions were raised by several Member States on the authority to reallocate savings to non-programme Sectors and sought clarification of the legal basis for such reallocations. While these queries were raised in the context of the funding for the Voluntary Mutual Separation Plan, the representative of the Director-General clarified that the Secretariat’s interpretation had been that while reallocation of savings to Programme Sectors remained a priority, the General Conference appropriation resolution gave the

Director-General the authority to reallocate funds among all appropriation lines within the 2% threshold. It was emphasized that this degree of management flexibility was necessary in order to meet unbudgeted risks. The Department of Legal Affairs confirmed, at the request of Member States, that the General Conference appropriation resolution provided the Director-General the authority to reallocate funds within the 2% threshold and that there was no impediment to such reallocations benefitting non-programme sectors. Member States expressed their disagreement and asked that it should be noted, that non-programme sectors should not benefit from the reallocation of savings from programme sectors, in coherence with their decisions at the Special Session of the Executive Board, the subsequent Executive Board and their General Conference resolution.

26. Further focusing on the 2015 **Voluntary Mutual Separation Programme**, Member States asked for clarifications from the Secretariat on the objective of the Programme and on its funding. In particular, list of posts which would be vacated as a result of the program, loss of expertise, objective of the program to support post 2015 agenda etc. was requested. It was recalled that the objective of this new Voluntary Mutual Separation Programme was to allow for skills renewal of the workforce, in particular in the light of the forthcoming post 2015 agenda. Also to allow for job redesign where required, and to give flexibility to managers in preparation of the 38 C/5.

27. Legal grounds for the allocation of regular programme savings towards the Voluntary Mutual Separation Programme remain to be clarified.

28. Member States requested that a list of the 39 posts, which have been rendered vacant by the Voluntary Mutual Separation Programme be provided to the Executive Board, including status of these posts such as grade, downgrading, abolition, information or savings resulting from this exercise.

29. Member States, while noting that one of the aims of the Voluntary Mutual Separation Programme as stated by the Secretariat is to better position the Secretariat for the post-2015 agenda, questioned how making General Service staff redundant relates to this objective.

30. While a number of Member States acknowledged that such Voluntary Separation Programmes may be necessary in the case of restructuring /downsizing/ rejuvenation/ re-profiling, it was underlined, however, that such cases should be discussed with the Board prior to their implementation.

31. **Extrabudgetary implementation rates, Cost recovery policy and project portfolio:** In response to concerns raised on the lower than target expenditure rates and the implication on the capacity of the Secretariat, it was recalled that expenditure rates had significantly increased in the last four years. However, lack of training on new policies, processes and tools may have an impact on the implementation capacity and the Secretariat is deploying efforts to address these through joint training programmes.

32. **Contractual services and reform:** Responding to a concern raised regarding the percentage of funds going for contracted services and its implication on intellectual work being outsourced, the representative of the Director General stated that the amounts include contracts for programme implementation, documentation, publication, external translations, etc. However the increased trend for contracted services was noted and efforts were being made to refine the analysis of this amount.

33. **Following the discussions, the Preparatory Group decided to draw the attention of the Executive Board to the following main points:**

- **Member States took note that the previous deficit was considered eliminated and that the current biennium is expected to be completed without any deficit.**

- Member States requested a clear differentiation between the lapse factor and the vacancy rate. It is to be noted that the relevant information on this is available in the document from the Budget Orientation Debate Report (196 EX/15.INF.3) and the External Auditor's Report on Budgetary Techniques (196 EX/15.INF Rev.) from the 196th Executive Board session.
- Member States sought indication of the anticipated level of the lapse factor for the 39 C/5. The vacancy rate was anticipated to be 9% by the end of 2017.
- The funding of the Voluntary Mutual Separation Programme is not consistent with previous decisions of the Special Session of the Executive Board, the subsequent Executive Board and the resolution of the General Conference and thereby with the principle that all savings generated shall be directed to the five Major Programmes. Legal grounds for the allocation of savings towards the Voluntary Mutual Separation Programme remain to be clarified.
- Member States requested that a list of the 39 posts, which have been rendered vacant by the Voluntary Mutual Separation Programme be provided to the Executive Board, including the status of these posts such as grade, downgrading, abolition, information or savings resulting from this exercise.
- Member States noted that one of the aims of the Voluntary Mutual Separation Programme is to better position the Secretariat for the post-2015 agenda and hence questioned how making General Service staff redundant relates to this objective.
- It was noted that some of the reported line transfers could have been covered from Part V of the budget.
- A *post facto* amendment to the Appropriation Resolution is not considered good practice. Member States, therefore underlined that the Appropriation Resolution could only be amended by the General Conference.
- As far as the cost recovery plan is concerned discrepancies were noted between the amount appearing in document EX/5 Part IV and that mentioned in document EX/4 Part II.
- The implementation rate of extrabudgetary resources is far from being satisfactory, in spite of efforts made to give staff appropriate training.
- Member States are awaiting the forecast of transfers to be provided by the Secretariat.
- Member States required further explanation on the increasing level of expenditure on contracted services, raising concern about existing in-house expertise.

**Item 5, Part I, D: Activities benefitting SIDS within the Organization's programme (2014-2017) and budget (38 C/5), including an analysis of additional resource requirements (197 EX/5 Part I and 197 EX/5.INF)**

34. In her introductory remarks, the representative of the Director-General recalled the Samoa Conference of 2014 and UNESCO's efforts to develop a SIDS Action Plan, a draft of which was presented at the 196th session of the Executive Board. The current session will consider the resources provided for activities benefitting SIDS and the extrabudgetary funding gap for implementation of the draft Action Plan.

35. Several Member States took the floor, commending the Secretariat on the efforts deployed to finalize the document. Several issues were raised during the debate, including:

- (i) The format of document 197 EX/5.INF should include numbered paragraphs; and there should be more consistency across the programmes in the presentation of the information. It was noted that while some programmes show Regular Programme and Extrabudgetary funds allocations and funding gaps, some include only part of this information. The funding gaps should be illustrated through tables and a clearer breakdown.
- (ii) The extrabudgetary target for Social and Human Sciences was pointed out to be very low, given the large number of the Sector's activities in the SIDS Action Plan, including MOST.
- (iii) The extrabudgetary funding gap for Culture is of concern, compared to other Sectors. Clarification was requested on activities related to the *General History of Africa* and the Slave Route, and in particular with respect to the \$9.5 million earmarked for the *General History of Africa* and whether this amount was entirely dedicated for or whether it covered the entire cost of the *General History of Africa*?
- (iv) SIDS encounter difficulties with the preparation of World Heritage nomination files, and would appreciate funds to support these efforts.
- (v) A stronger coordination on SIDS is needed, similar to Priority Africa. It was recalled that in the past there was a SIDS platform with focal points in sectors and strong coordination. Questions were raised on the way UNESCO intends to address the SIDS as a priority and the implementation of commitments made by the Director-General during the Samoa Conference.
- (vi) Given the focus on SIDS, emphasis should be provided on climate change and its impacts. The document should also take into account the sustainable development goals (SDGs) and UNFCCC COP 21.
- (vii) There is a need for a more open, transparent approach for the analysis of extrabudgetary resources and review of the fundraising strategy in light of existing discrepancies among Sectors in the volume of mobilized funds. Given the SIDS priority, responsibility to fundraise for SIDS activities should be clearly designated.

36. In her response, the representative of the Director-General agreed that it was a learning experience without precedence for the Secretariat and that the absence of clear indicators for SIDS in the Organization's information systems makes the identification of budget allocations very difficult. She explained the rationale that led to the identification in the document of four groupings of SIDS-related activities as shown in paragraphs 6 to 9 of document 197 EX/5 Part I (D). She reassured the Member States that the issue of coherence was not due to an absence of cooperation but rather due to the complexity of the task, and also the inherent differences between the programme.

37. The Group was also informed that the Secretariat will provide a finalized SIDS Action Plan, together with accurate figures, as well as a strategy for implementation by the 199th session (Spring 2016). The Secretariat will also propose ways to measure UNESCO's impact on SIDS. Moreover, the representative of the Director-General agreed that the Action Plan must be aligned with the 2030 Agenda and confirmed that climate change is a priority in Major Programme II.

38. In response to enquiries about the US \$9.5 million for the *General History of Africa*, it was also clarified that the amount corresponds to the overall cost of the programme and that the *General History of Africa* benefitted SIDS in Africa as well as in other regions.

39. The representative of the Director-General also recalled that the World Heritage Committee debated at its last session the mismatch between the needs identified and the funding available for nominations. This issue will also be discussed at the forthcoming General Assembly of the World



Heritage Convention. It was also emphasized that the World Heritage Fund provides support in the form of seed money to attract additional funding.

40. Concerning the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC), it was stressed that given that there is currently little regular budget earmarked for SIDS-related activities in IOC, extrabudgetary fundraising will be key to the success of this work. SIDS are at the heart of the IOC mandate as is climate change and the role of oceans. The SAMOA Pathway encouraged IOC to develop a set of SIDS-oriented activities spanning climate change, ocean acidification, disaster risk reduction including tsunamis, all of which require increased observations, training and education.

41. Commenting on the resource mobilization for the implementation of the SIDS Action Plan, a number of Member States noted some inconsistencies between Programme Sectors in the approach taken to present the available resources and the funding gap to be met by extrabudgetary resources. In this respect, speakers queried the low funding gap for Social and Human Sciences issues despite the need for reinforcement of Social and Human Science programme activities relating to MOST and youth.

42. In her reply, the representative of the Director-General noted that there may be an issue of internal coherence in the presentation of the budget figures. Stressing the Social and Human Sector commitment to the SIDS agenda, she clarified that the amounts mentioned by this Sector related to the activities undertaken specifically targeting SIDS. The target for extrabudgetary resources mobilization was based on the Sector's track record, which has been low. Given the importance of building sufficient capacity for the implementation of the SIDS Action Plan SHS will reinforce its staffing through assignment of new international posts in the 38 C/5 to Kingston and Apia Offices.

43. In addition, she underlined that the Sector has been addressing the SIDS constituency within various earmarkings of funds in the areas of youth and MOST. Some \$200,000 was recently secured for the Youth Forum which will be significantly utilized to ensure the participation of LDC youth including SIDS. Furthermore, through the MOST activities held recently in Durban at the World Social Science Forum, a panel was organized, in cooperation with Saint Lucia, on "The Sir Arthur Lewis centennial" enhancing the understanding of the intellectual contribution of the SIDS to the rest of the world.

44. In terms of the tools that can help with the budgetary data on SIDS, the representative of the Director-General explained that in SISTER there is a box to tick for the 37 C/5 to indicate that an activity contributes to SIDS, but this does not resolve budget allocations. In addition, it was explained that the planned FABS redesign includes a more comprehensive financial reporting facility for Africa and Gender, and a similar approach can be considered for SIDS, if the Executive Board so requests. Finally, it was explained that funding strategies for the two global priorities do exist, and that a strategy could be developed for SIDS once the 38 C/5 workplans are finalized after General Conference.

**45. Following the discussions, the Preparatory Group decided to draw the attention of the Executive Board to the following main points:**

- **Member States appreciated the elaboration of the first overall SIDS programme assessment.**
- **Member States highlighted the lack of coherence between sectors in the development of activities, budget allocations and volume of mobilized funds benefitting SIDS.**
- **The document should include the issue of climate change and its impact in SIDS as well as take into account the SDGs and UNFCCC COP 21.**

- It was suggested that consideration be given to the possibility of creating in SISTER and RBB a mechanism that would facilitate the identification of specific activities benefitting SIDS similar to the ones used for Priority Africa and Gender Equality.
- A table with a clear breakdown between Regular Budget and extrabudgetary funds is needed, so as to facilitate dialogue with possible donors.
- A strategy for raising extrabudgetary funds is also needed, informed by the above-mentioned table.

**Item 5, Part IV, B: *Implementation of the action plan for improved management of extrabudgetary funds (197 EX/5 Part IV and 197 EX/5 Part IV Add.)***

46. Several Members States asked for clarification from the Secretariat on the cost recovery policy (CRP) and related issues such as the rate applied by UNESCO compared to other United Nations Agencies, harmonization of programme support cost (PSC) rate, follow up on the mid-term review of the United Nation-wide review of the full cost recovery and UNESCO's participation, as well as the timeframe to revise the policy, the management and use of FITOCA funds and the distribution/allocation of interest generated on extrabudgetary funds.

47. **On the cost recovery and review of policy:** It was noted that a new tool was introduced and 2015 focused on training staff and review of projects. Improvements in the cost recovery are soon to be visible as it currently stands at 1% as against the 2% target. The review of policy will be initiated internally in 2016.

48. The issue of harmonization of cost recovery rates for United Nations agencies pooled funds was discussed by a United Nations Finance & Budget Network working group, of which UNESCO is a member. The rates vary among agencies and as confirmed by the survey conducted by the working group, a variety of practices exist among organizations and can be attributed to different models used to achieve the balance between the flat rate and implementing the QCPR decision on full cost recovery and proportionality from core and non-core funding sources. It was clarified that differential rates charged by United Nations agencies could be due to a variety of factors such as size of the projects, the definitions of direct and indirect costs, and finally the total volume of extra budgetary resources received. It was clear however that the large number of relatively low value projects in the UNESCO project portfolio is making full cost recovery difficult.

49. It was noted that UNESCO currently distributes two third of the interest while some United Nations agencies have policies to retain all interest generated from extra-budgetary projects. As stated under paragraph 50 on page 16 of the document, UNESCO will initiate the review of its cost recovery policy in 2016 and in the process look at different models adopted by United Nations agencies.

50. Member States sought clarification on the FITOCA modality and the costs covered under it. It was explained that the Cost Recovery Policy is a full budgeting principle. All direct costs for the implementation of extrabudgetary projects, such as technical assistance, direct project management traced to projects etc. should be directly charged against these projects. In addition, indirect costs should also be charged to these projects based on a flat rate Programme Support Costs (PSC). These indirect costs of global administrative support are charged through PSC and the income so generated goes to the FITOCA account. The 13% rate is closer to actual cost at UNESCO and it was recommended by the External Auditors that this rate be applied as a standard.

51. Responding to the concern of Member States on the safety of investments in Special Accounts citing the example of the Emergency Fund, the representative of the Director-General clarified that the External Auditors reviewed the expenditures of the Emergency Fund and raised no issue regarding the transactions of the Fund. While it was clarified to the Secretariat that neither

the Executive Board nor the External Auditor was questioning the expenditure of the Emergency Fund, however, it was the Secretariat's interpretation of a clause regarding the use of the balance which could make the risk-averse donors reconsider contributing to Special Accounts.

52. Member States recommended that the Secretariat envisage a structured financing dialogue which should go hand in hand with the planning and budgeting process, in order to achieve more long-term predictability, less ear-marked resourcing and enhanced alignment between extra budgetary funding and approved Programme and Budget (C/5). It was also pointed out that there was an urgent need to develop better project formulation and prioritization.

**53. Following the discussions, the Preparatory Group decided to draw the attention of the Executive Board to the following main points:**

- **Member States have insisted on the follow up of the review process on cost recovery mechanism and requested a clear time frame related to this. They expressed concerns with regard to the achievement of the 2% target for cost recovery by the 199th session of the Executive Board, as decided at the 196th session of the Executive Board.**
- **It was noted that a precondition for a resource mobilization strategy was the elaboration of quality projects.**
- **Member States requested more information on the FITOCA and its modalities of management.**
- **Member States requested further clarification on the relationship and balance between the Regular Budget and extrabudgetary funds. It is not clear whether Regular Budget subsidizes extrabudgetary or the contrary. The cost recovery policy needs further explanation and clarification, and its implementation needs further strengthening.**
- **Member States emphasized the need for structured financing dialogue as a permanent mechanism and the need for all Member States (not just donors) to take part in such dialogues. It was also requested that the broad spectrum of Member States should be involved in elaborating the modalities of the dialogues.**
- **Concern was raised as to the capacity of staff to mobilize private sector extrabudgetary funding, especially in the field offices.**
- **It was signalled that if one of the aims of the field office network is to mobilize extrabudgetary funds, then Directors/Heads of Field Offices should have clear fundraising targets as part of their performance evaluations.**
- **Concern was raised as to the overall implementation capacity of the resource mobilization strategy.**
- **Given the information on recent training delivered, it was questioned whether there is an overall strategy for staff training.**
- **Concern was raised as to the full participation in the United Nations system in terms of development and implementation of the common definition of operating costs.**
- **It was queried whether there were adequate operational structures in place to implement mega-intersectoral projects and intersectoral priorities.**

- **While appreciating the new evaluation policy, it was underlined that its continued implementation, including decentralized evaluations, is necessary.**
- **In the proposed draft decision, it is important to explicitly stress the role of field offices notably as pertains to paragraph 7.**
- **It was queried whether Priority Africa benefited from mobilization of extrabudgetary resources and innovative financing, as has been stated by the Secretariat in previous discussions.**

**Item 5, Part IV, D: *Invest for Efficient Delivery* (197 EX/5 Part IV and 197 EX/5.INF.2)**

54. The representative of the Director-General introduced the item noting that first and foremost, reform or change can no longer be considered separately from the implementation of SDG's. He further noted that Member States across the United Nations system are driving this reflection and it is only natural that the Member States here take ownership of how UNESCO should be operationally fit in this context. This discussion among Member States has yet to take place and the Secretariat looks forward to it in the context of the Preparatory Group, the Executive Board and the forthcoming General Conference.

55. Indeed, the context provided the opportunity to rethink the way UNESCO delivers on its mandate, supporting its Member States to achieve the SDGs at the global, regional and national levels, aligned with the demands of a larger United Nations system-wide reform agenda.

56. The decision by the Member States at the last session of the Executive Board to create an "Invest for Efficient Delivery Fund" went in that direction. The representative of the Director-General underlined that the document presented at this stage, prior to discussions among the Member States on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and UNESCO's operational positioning, provided for an initial outline of such a plan and a limited set of high-priority areas for investment along with the Financial Regulations in the Annex.

57. It was also noted that while the document in its paragraph 12 indicated eight priority areas to strengthen UNESCO's leadership, these priority areas would need to be further discussed internally within the Programme Management Committee (PMC) and would also need to be detailed with specific projects which would have embedded benefits realization plans and return on investment details. It was also important to carefully listen to the debates at the Executive Board and General Conference to fine-tune, as required, the priority areas.

58. On stating the accent at this stage on two main priority areas which are in need for immediate support and investments, it was also noted that given the interest that Member States have on having Structured Dialogues on Financing, it would be fundamental not to lose sight of the operational enablers such as HR training and Knowledge Sharing and ICT platforms to help achieve results and which will be critical to ensuring common vision and shared objectives.

59. Specifically focusing on Knowledge Management and ICT investments, it was stated that while the real basis of UNESCO's progress towards Information Technology was set in the 26th session (1991) of the General Conference UNESCO, the first real major investment and action in implementation of modern management and monitoring instruments came only in 2000 through introduction of the Systems, Applications, Products in Data Processing (SAP) – Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system. The SAP ERP system in UNESCO has since been rolled out to the UNESCO Field Offices and Institutes thus connecting the entire Organization. This also led to UNESCO being a very early implementer of the International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS) and contributed to four principles of reform: Accountability, Transparency, Decentralization and Results-Based planning and management.

60. Noting that under the current Director-General's leadership, the Organization has moved further to results-based budgeting, transparency initiative (on which there was an initial funding

from DFID), accountability frameworks and improved monitoring and reporting, the representative of the Director-General noted that to continue this progress, the core corporate systems as designed in 2000 now need to be brought up to current needs and requirements, which will require investments.

61. The representative of the Director-General also noted that the financial regulations presented for this fund were being presented as a new model for the first time, the Secretariat having accepted the recommendation of the External Auditor on the authority of governing bodies on “strategic” Special Accounts. The definition of strategic and the applicable authority (General Conference or Executive Board) and also on the fact that the Executive Board can only make a recommendation to the Director-General on the financial rules and regulations which will still need to be discussed with the Member States.

62. Member States welcomed the document and there was a consensus that this fund should make investments with a Return on Investment: the commitment of some Member States to approve the ZNG Plus scenario is conditional on the future Return on Investment of this fund. An analysis was requested that could explain why the Secretariat has chosen these specific areas of investment in relation to other options. The Secretariat was also invited to present more radical, bolder options to the Member States. It was also noted that there was a necessity to clear any possible confusion with the previous Fit for Purpose concept which was never approved by the Member States.

63. On a query on whether there would be a unit leading this initiative on Invest for Efficient Delivery, it was clarified that the initiatives and projects under Invest for Efficient Delivery would be under the Programme Management Committee (PMC) led by the Deputy Director-General and there would thus be no dedicated unit.

64. Member States expressed support for modernization of the Organization and remarked that in fact the Governance External Audit has recommended that UNESCO speed up the investment in Knowledge Management and ICT. However, further information about expected savings from the KM and ICT investments proposed were required.

65. Member States also recalled the background of the fund and expressed the intent to reduce non-programme costs and implement a step-change increase in capacity of the Organization. They asked for the return on investment and payback period of the KM & ICT investments proposed.

66. The representative of the Director-General went through the proposed initiatives one by one to explain the estimated return on investment indicating that both the cost estimates and the expected benefits are initial figures and more analysis and scoping needed to be done:

Redesign of core systems: The current core systems (FABS, STEPS and to some extent SISTER) are over 15 years old and do not support the current and changing business requirements and some parts like the budget system are obsolete and need to be replaced. Besides many qualitative improvements, cost savings are also expected due to more flexible reporting and better support to the programme specialists. The current estimated savings are around US \$1.5 million per year which means a payback period of 2-3 years.

Ensure business continuity and disaster recovery: UNESCO currently does not have a secondary data centre and therefore runs the risk of operations ceasing in case of a flooding or fire in the single data centre. This investment is therefore required from a risk perspective and should be seen as insurance rather than a potential saving.

Implement system support for resource mobilization: The implementation of a Constituent Relationship Management (CRM) system will improve resource mobilization in addition some cost savings are envisioned by better support to programme specialists and centralization of some tasks. The current estimated savings are around \$450,000 per year which means a payback period of 2-3 years.

Strengthen knowledge sharing and collaboration in the field: The intention is to continue the initiative that was started in Africa to improve knowledge sharing within and between offices and Headquarters and expand it to the other regions. This initiative has been quite successful in the regional offices in Africa, however it is not possible to provide an estimated savings amount at this time due to the largely qualitative and intangible nature of the project.

Improve document and multimedia management: This refers to the replacement of UNESDOC a repository of all the documents of the organization including those of the governing bodies. This is an old system with a high dependency on a single developer and needs to be replaced primarily for risk reasons. Nonetheless some savings can be achieved by merging document and multimedia management with an expected payback period of four years.

67. Member States also enquired whether staff training fit within this fund given that training to staff was reported previously by BFM. While it was underlined that the trainings listed in the document are all necessary, they would not result in a step change to the cost of the Organization. It was pointed out that the training should all be undertaken regardless of the creation of the investment fund.

68. Member States also underlined the need for wording on a common definition for the term “investment” which is yet to be proposed, for this particular fund.

69. **Following the discussions, the Preparatory Group decided to draw the attention of the Executive Board to the following main points:**

- **It is to be recalled that the Invest for Efficient Delivery idea is a key core part of the delicate consensus reached on the ZNG Plus budget.**
- **The investment fund will need to produce a return of at least \$11 million in the 39 C/5 in line with the budget consensus.**
- **It is understood that Invest for Efficient Delivery will be implemented within the existing programmes and services.**
- **Member States flagged the following issues to be further developed or clarified: return on investment, calendar of implementation, payback period and lack of other investment options in the document.**
- **Clarity is required regarding the definition of investment in this context; a tighter definition of investment shall be proposed.**
- **Further clarification is required on the expected savings announced under the KM and ICT Strategy and under the proposed KM and ICT investments.**
- **The Secretariat recognized that this “strategic” Special Account will have its investments/allocations approved by Member States.**

**Item 5, Part IV, E: *Criteria for introducing new and maintaining existing programmes for regular and extrabudgetary programmes (197 EX/5 Part IV)***

70. In his introduction, the representative of the Director-General mentioned that the reporting envisages the preparation by the Secretariat, for the third spring session of each quadrennial period, of a strategic and analytical report, the Strategic Results Report (SRR), which should inform strategic decision-making and future planning, and enable the Executive Board to forward recommendations to the General Conference concerning the implementation of sunset clauses for UNESCO’s programmes, and specifically regarding the termination or continuation of programmes, as requested by the General Conference at its 37th session.

71. The representative of the Director-General explained that the document proposed a set of key criteria for introducing new or maintaining existing programmes, which would be used in the course of programme reviews.

72. The document was well received by Member States, who underlined that it contained valid, relevant and useful information on the criteria to be used in programme reviews.

73. A few concerns were raised with regard to the risks of relying solely on these criteria for decision-making on the termination or continuation of a programme, particularly in the case of a programme carried out in a field office with limited delivery capacity; or when a programme fails to score high on some or most of the criteria, while it is at the core of the Organization's mandate. Suggestions were made to include other criteria, such as the geographical scope, or the strategic importance and relevance of the subject.

74. It was regretted that the document did not contain a proposed decision for recommendation by the Preparatory Group to be formulated to the Executive Board in that regard.

75. Member States also inquired about the level of analysis on which the proposed criteria would be applied.

76. In his reply, the representative of the Director-General recalled the Resolution of the General Conference by which the Director-General had been authorized to undertake, during the period 2014-2017, a review of the main lines of action and their expected results, including those of the intergovernmental and international programmes and category 1 institutes pertaining to Major Programmes, and to propose their continuation, reorientation, including possible reinforcement, exit strategies or termination, based on clear evaluation criteria. He emphasized that there were no priority ranking among the criteria, and that these would be used to assess existing programmes through an internal process carried out by Senior Managers, in cooperation with BSP and IOS, and leading to the formulation of the recommendations and proposals by the Director-General that would be submitted to the governing bodies for deliberation and decision.

**77. Following the discussions, the Preparatory Group decided to draw the attention of the Executive Board to the following main points:**

- **There is a need for a draft decision on this item; in this regard, it has been further recalled that a draft decision should accompany every item presented to the Executive Board.**
- **Member States need to be aware of the criteria used for introducing, maintaining or terminating programmes. It is to be clarified as to what level this will apply.**
- **There is a need to take into account the core mandate of UNESCO when considering the continuation of existing programmes.**
- **There is also a need to develop methods to synthesize the criteria in a comprehensive and analytical way.**

**Item 5, Part IV, F: *Proposal for presenting the performance indicators (PI) and targets related to the global priorities Africa and gender equality (197 EX/5 Part IV)***

78. In introducing the item, the representative of the Director General recalled that the Executive Board at its 196th session requested the Director-General to present a proposal for presenting the Performance indicators and Targets related to the Global Priorities Africa and Gender Equality in a way that increases their mainstreaming and visibility and does not restrict them to a specific Global Priority Expected Results section.

79. Member States acknowledged the difficulty of modifying the C/5 presentation at this late stage. In light of the importance of this matter they requested for the document to be presented at the 199<sup>th</sup> session of the Executive Board therefore providing sufficient time for exchanges prior to the presentation of the Draft 39 C/5. In addition, they called for the Secretariat to ensure, in future, that a draft decision is proposed for each document.

**80. Following the discussions, the Preparatory Group decided to draw the attention of the Executive Board to the following main points:**

- **Member States requested the mainstreaming of the Performance Indicators for global priorities throughout all programme sectors, instead of limiting them to a few expected results.**
- **There is a need for a draft decision on this item.**

**Item 6: *Outcomes of the World Education Forum 2015 (197 EX/6 and 197 EX/6 Add.)***

81. The Preparatory Group congratulated the Secretariat for the effective work over the past two years, which, through a highly inclusive process and very active engagement of Member States, led to a successful World Education Forum, a bold and ambitious Incheon Declaration and the development of a Framework for Action (FFA) of high quality.

82. One Member State enquired how this ambitious agenda would be translated into tangible results at country level and what kind of follow-up mechanisms were foreseen, expressing high expectations of the FFA in this regard. A number of delegations encouraged the Secretariat to reflect on the implementation of the sustainable development goals (SDGs) and the need to have a resource management plan for the next 15 years, noting that the Education Sector has limited implementation capacity. It was noted that the capacity shortage is especially acute for UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) which would have much more complex work in monitoring the new agenda.

83. Some Member States sought clarification on the link between the Education 2030 high-level meeting to be held on 4 November and the 38th session of the UNESCO General Conference, as well as on logistic arrangements. One Member State asked for an inclusive meeting and follow-up, also involving the African Union.

84. In his response, the representative of the Director-General acknowledged that it was a challenge to translate the new ambitious agenda at the national level and underlined that the Education 2030 agenda was holistic, universal and Member States-driven, with UNESCO facilitating and responding to the needs of Member States.

85. Regarding the Education Sector's resource management to implement the new agenda, it was reported that the priorities for the Education Sector vis-à-vis the ten education targets were discussed at the leadership retreat in the summer. A first result of this reflection was presented in document 197 EX/7. A short document would be prepared for the General Conference on UNESCO's function, including implementation of the education targets on the ground and monitoring of progress towards these targets. He expressed the hope that the new Global Education Monitoring Report would be part of the overall monitoring process to be set up in New York. He reported that the future coordination mechanism has been discussed in a consultation meeting held on 18 September.

86. Moreover, the importance of having a resource management plan was underlined. It was also noted that the Education Sector has been working closely with the Global Partnership on Education (GPE) as the main funding mechanism of the new agenda and emphasized the importance of other contributions such as through the private sector.



87. Regarding the Education 2030 high-level meeting, it was clarified that the event will be organized by UNESCO and the co-convening agencies in Room II (which had a capacity of 450 seats, thus two per country) to adopt the FFA on 4 November, a day before the General Conference Education Commission starts. The Education Commission would then discuss UNESCO's role in the implementation of Education 2030.

88. Finally it was reported that the African Union is a major partner in the process of elaborating Education 2030 and that a joint meeting with technical experts from Africa would be held in November on how to implement the new agenda.

**89. Following the discussions, the Preparatory Group decided to draw the attention of the Executive Board to the following main points:**

- **Long-term operational plan translating the report into concrete and sustainable actions, in particular for the 39 C/5, is required. A strategic results report will be presented to the Executive Board at its 199th session.**
- **A strategy is required for achieving tangible results at country level and there is need to develop ambitious and innovative mechanisms.**
- **Member States raised the complexities of the monitoring agenda.**
- **Logistics for timing and space for the launch of the Framework for Action on 4 November 2015 were raised.**

**Item 7: *UNESCO's participation in the preparations for a post-2015 development agenda***  
(197 EX/7)

90. In his introduction to the item, the representative of the Director-General noted that Member States had reached consensus on the 2030 agenda for sustainable development, which will be formally adopted at the United Nations High-Level Summit in New York from 25 to 27 September and which will go into effect on 1 January 2016, replacing the current Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) with 17 new sustainable development goals (SDGs) and 169 targets. He also mentioned how UNESCO's priorities were reflected in the 2030 agenda, UNESCO's advocacy efforts in this regard, and the ongoing work to develop the global indicator framework to measure the SDG goals and targets. He emphasized the need to now focus on how UNESCO will support Member States in delivering on this ambitious agenda and that this is the purpose of the discussion paper in Part II of the report, which would also contribute to the discussions on the future Programme and Budget 2018-2021 (39 C/5).

91. Member States thanked the Secretariat for the excellent document, noting that Part I reflected UNESCO's achievements on inclusion of its priorities in the 2030 agenda and that Part II raised substantial questions, which merited further strategic debate linked to the preparation of the 39 C/5 at the General Conference. It was recommended that the issue and the document should be placed on the agenda of all Commissions. One Member State suggested that Part II could be broadened to be the basis of discussion on the 39 C/5 at the General Conference and asked how the debate on this issue could be structured.

92. Additional information was requested regarding the role of UNESCO in the Technology Facilitation Mechanism (TFM); UNESCO's entry points in terms of culture; the interlinkage between culture, the environment and climate change; and whether Member States would be able to comment on the Global Report on Culture and Sustainable Urban Development. Questions were also raised on how UNESCO addresses discrimination against persons with disabilities, whether UNESCO would carry out an evaluation or impact assessment of its work to promote human rights education and training, and how the Organization was monitoring the 1974 Recommendation.

93. Member States emphasized the challenge of implementing the 2030 agenda with the Organization's limited resources and linked this issue with discussions on UNESCO's resource mobilization strategy. One Member State noted that the outcome of the climate change conference, COP 21, would also have an impact on UNESCO's work and would need to be taken into account. More clarification was requested in terms of the process for developing indicators for the SDGs and targets and on how UNESCO was working to address violence in the Middle East, which impedes efforts to implement the SDGs.

94. The representative of the Director-General noted that Technology Facilitation Mechanism (TFM) was established at the Addis Ababa Conference and that it would be launched at the United Nations High-Level Summit in September. The TFM will be based on a multi-stakeholder collaboration between Member States, civil society, the private sector, the scientific community, United Nations entities and other stakeholders. It will be composed of a United Nations Interagency Task Team on Science, Technology and Innovation for the SDGs and a collaborative Multistakeholder Forum on Science, Technology and Innovation for the SDGs and an online platform. UNESCO will play a central role in the United Nations Task team, of which it is an active member. UNESCO is discussing with France, the possibility of hosting the first session of the Multistakeholder Forum on Science, Technology and Innovation for the SDGs in the spring of 2016.

95. It was explained that human rights education remains an overriding principle of SDG Goal 4 and Global Citizenship Education (GCED) which integrates peace and human rights education. The representative of the Director-General added that additional information on UNESCO's activities on GCED is contained in document 197 EX/6 Addendum. The document also includes the Education Sector's contribution to the global debate on the measurement of GCED-related learning outcomes and work on prevention of violent extremism and radicalization. GCED also features prominently in the Education 2030 Agenda, and he referred to target 4.7 of the post-2015 development agenda, which integrates the principles of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) and GCED. He also underscored the fact that the 1974 Recommendation concerning Education for International Understanding, Cooperation and Peace and Education relating to Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms is a guiding principle for the Education Sector's work on human rights education and that UNESCO monitors its implementation.

96. It was underlined that culture had been recognized as an enabler for sustainable development in the 2030 agenda, and that there was a need to develop a strategy to reinforce the link with cultural heritage and natural heritage protection in a broader perspective. It was also stressed that more work was needed to strengthen the contribution of intangible cultural heritage to promoting sustainable consumption and production patterns and that indicators were being developed with the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) on this issue. It was also explained that UNESCO was working with ICOMOS to address the issue of climate change on heritage preservation, and that Member States would be invited to participate in the Hangzhou Conference and to contribute to the Global Report on Culture and Sustainable Urban Development.

97. The representative of the Director-General noted that this item would be included on the agenda of the General Conference and that it would be linked to the discussions on the 39 C/5. It was also explained that the Global Indicator Framework is being developed by the Inter Agency Group on SDG indicators, in which UNESCO is actively engaged and that a first proposal would be formulated by November 2015 and would then be considered and endorsed by the United Nations Statistical Commission in March 2016. More discussion was needed on how to mobilize the resources needed to implement the 2030 agenda, including investing in the needed capacities. He reminded the group of the responsibility of the countries themselves in raising the resources needed to implement the SDGs and UNESCO's advocacy role in encouraging donors to meet their ODA commitments.

98. In addition, it was also indicated that UNESCO organized in November 2014 an international conference on the role of information and communication technology (ICTs) for persons with disabilities, with several follow-up activities foreseen to promote the recommendations of the

Conference. In terms of addressing violence in the Middle East, it was also noted that UNESCO is taking a broad approach and is working at different levels and with different partners to prevent violence against students, attacks on schools, and to protect heritage. Mention was also made to the UNESCO conference held in June on fighting radicalization of youth, which provided a platform for debate and recommendations regarding youth radicalization on the Internet.

99. **Following the discussions, the Preparatory Group decided to draw the attention of the Executive Board to the following main points:**

- **There is a need for a debate on UNESCO's comparative advantage in the participation in the preparation for the post-2015 agenda. What will UNESCO's role be? How does UNESCO intend to deliver and which resources will it identify to do so?**
- **Member States invited the Secretariat to broaden the discussion paper so that it can serve as basis for discussion for the future 39 C/5 at the General Conference.**
- **The need for guidelines to structure this discussion at the General Conference was highlighted.**
- **Overall, item 7 will need to be linked to item 22 on "Preparation of the 38th session of the General Conference".**

**Item 9: *Report on the implementation of the International Decade for the Rapprochement of Cultures (2013-2022) (197 EX/9)***

100. The representative of the Director-General highlighted that the need for promoting intercultural dialogue was evident in the present international context and hence the importance for the International Decade for the Rapprochement of Cultures to mobilize all UNESCO's sectors and stakeholders at the international level. The report provides key actions undertaken since the adoption of the Action Plan for this Decade. An Expert Meeting was held in March 2015 with a view to examining closely the conceptual framework and the implementation modalities to be put forward by the Decade. It was also referred to the Third World Forum on Intercultural Dialogue, held in Baku, which gathered around 35 UNESCO Chairs. Therefore, Member States were invited to consult the website of the Decade to obtain more information. The Secretariat is looking forward to enhanced interaction with this Action Plan and to receive information from Member States on activities undertaken at country level.

101. An overview of important actions foreseen by the Secretariat for the coming years was provided, with a view to building a more tangible programme to be outlined in a roadmap, which will include: (i) survey for exploring measurement options to enhance intercultural dialogue and mutual understanding at national levels, in cooperation with the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS); (ii) mapping of intercultural competence tools and programmes, including e-learning modules with a view to strengthening cultural literacy; (iii) innovative research initiatives with existing and new partners; and (iv) the development of a sensitization and awareness 'campaign' to brand the objectives of the Decade, with youth as main target group.

102. The Preparatory Group was informed of the trust placed in UNESCO for "holding the pen" in the preparation and coordination of the Annual Report of the United Nations Secretary-General on resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly on: (i) Follow-up to the Declaration and Programme of action for a culture of peace and non-violence and (ii) Promotion of interreligious and intercultural dialogue, understanding and cooperation for peace, which will be led, as of 2016, by UNESCO.

103. In the brief ensuing debate, gratitude and satisfaction were expressed with regard to the document presented and Members of the Preparatory Group were invited to recommend to the Executive Board the adoption of this item without debate. UNESCO's responsibility in "holding the

pen” on the relevant resolutions was recognized and seen as the expression of confidence by other United Nations agencies. The representative of the Director-General answered by highlighting key work undertaken in the development of tools on quality education and media information literacy, as well as intercultural competences, emphasizing the commitment and collaboration with Education Sector in the area of global citizenship education. It was pointed out that the Euro-Arab Dialogue initiative offers an opportunity to further provide inputs related on this topic.

**104. Following the discussions, the Preparatory Group decided to draw the attention of the Executive Board to the following main point:**

- **Member States recommend that this item be examined without debate at the Executive Board.**

**Item 12: *Enhancing UNESCO’s Contributions to Promote Culture of Respect (197 EX/12)***

105. Under this agenda item inquiries have been made as to whether the Secretariat would produce the usual document containing comments of the Director-General on items submitted by Member States which may have administrative and financial implications. Moreover, it was requested that a copy of the Human Rights Council resolution 16/18, adopted on 12 April 2011 be attached to document 197 EX/12. It was observed that some operational items included in the above-mentioned resolution, were not intended to be undertaken by an intergovernmental organization.

106. The representative of the Director-General underlined that the Secretariat welcomed the spirit of the document which calls for the reinforcement of the Organization’s mandate in promoting intercultural dialogue, combatting racism, discrimination and xenophobia. Regarding the proposed draft decision and the scope of the expected UNESCO intervention, it was noted that the Executive Board would certainly benefit from a presentation by the sponsoring Member States. It was however stressed that many of the areas evoked in the United Nations Human Rights Council resolution 16/18 are already covered in the Action Plan of the International Decade for the Rapprochement of Cultures and also in the Secretary-General’s Report to the General Assembly mentioned in document 197 EX/9. Additional discussions should help to clarify the targeted support requested by UNESCO and, it was pointed out that should the proposed draft decision be adopted by the Executive Board, it would carry financial implications for the Secretariat for which funding would need to be identified.

**107. Following the discussions, the Preparatory Group decided to draw the attention of the Executive Board to the following main points:**

- **It was noted that there was no presentation of the item by the Member States who proposed the item on the agenda.**
- **Member States noted that the scope and boundaries were not clear in the document presented. Neither the Secretariat nor the Member States were therefore in a position to define the nature and extent of UNESCO’s action under this item.**
- **It is recommended that the United Nations Human Rights Council resolution 16/18 of 12 April 2011 be provided to the Executive Board along with document 197 EX/12.**

**Item 18, Part II: *Implementation of the current Programme and Budget (37 C/5) (197 EX/18 Part II)***

108. The representative of the Director-General recalled that in conformity with Article V.6 (b) of the Constitution of UNESCO, the Executive Board is responsible for the execution of the programme adopted by the Conference, and that Part II of this report traditionally focuses on

programmatic issues. The Secretariat explained that the presentation of this report had been simplified, focusing on the decisions taken by the Board and recognizing that the Board expresses its views progressively during the biennium through explicit decisions on the performance of individual programmes. In this regard, it was recalled that the decisions taken by the Board on the EX/4 itself now contain extensive considerations by the Board on the challenges and lessons learned from programme implementation.

109. Members acknowledged the document but expressed concern about its format, which differed from the previous report. They generally stressed the need for an analysis of the Executive Board's work undertaken in 2014-2015. Members requested that the report be revised accordingly, using the traditional format adopted by the Board at its 182nd session (182 EX/6). The Secretariat confirmed that the document would be revised accordingly in time for the 197th Executive Board session. Members welcomed this proposal and recommended that the future format of this report be reviewed by the General Conference.

**110. Following the discussions, the Preparatory Group decided to draw the attention of the Executive Board to the following main points:**

- **Member States expressed concern on the change in format of this document and recommended that the document be presented to the General Conference in the previously agreed format.**
- **The General Conference may wish to review the desired future format of this report.**