



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization

Organisation  
des Nations Unies  
pour l'éducation,  
la science et la culture

Organización  
de las Naciones Unidas  
para la Educación,  
la Ciencia y la Cultura

Организация  
Объединенных Наций по  
вопросам образования,  
науки и культуры

منظمة الأمم المتحدة  
للتربية والعلم والثقافة

联合国教育、  
科学及文化组织

## The Assistant Director-General for External Relations and Public Information

To the Secretaries-General  
of the National Commissions for UNESCO

Ref.: ERI/NCS/NAC/11.166

16 AUG 2011

Sir/Madam,

While life slows down in this period of the year, UNESCO is fully working to prepare some important forthcoming events.

### Interregional meeting of National Commissions on the occasion of the 36<sup>th</sup> General Conference

As you were informed in a separate letter, the next interregional meeting of National Commissions will be held on Monday, 24 October 2011, on the eve of the 36<sup>th</sup> session of the General Conference. This one-day interregional meeting will replace the numerous half-day regional meetings which were held during previous sessions of the General Conference. This "informal" exchange aims to update you on the latest developments at the Organization and further associate you in UNESCO's work.

These developments concern particularly the Review of UNESCO's cooperation with National Commissions, new modalities for regional consultations on C/4 and C/5, management of the Participation Programme, update on the field network reform and the use of UNESCO's name and logo. I do hope that you will be able to attend this 24 October's meeting and look forward to your valuable inputs.

### 7<sup>th</sup> UNESCO Youth Forum

As announced by the Director-General in a circular letter (CL/3969), the 7<sup>th</sup> UNESCO Youth Forum will be held from 17 to 20 October at UNESCO Headquarters. The main theme of the Forum is "How youth drive change". Mrs Irina Bokova and several personalities, such as UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador Nizan Guanaes, UN Youth Champion Monique Coleman and UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador Forest Whitaker, will be participating in the Forum's events. Mr Whitaker will lead in particular a workshop with selected youth delegates on conflict resolution.

National Commissions are invited to facilitate the nomination of two youth delegates from each Member State to participate in this forum. I would like to remind you that the deadline for submitting nominations is extended to 20 August 2011. The section criteria include: 18 to 24 years old people, gender parity and active involvement in a youth organization, participation in the youth-related activities at community or country level. The Section for Youth, Sport and Physical Education ([youth@unesco.org](mailto:youth@unesco.org)) remains at your disposal to advise and/or assist in the nomination process.

### Celebration of International Days

UNESCO continues to celebrate, in cooperation with other UN agencies and the Member States, numerous international days which fall within its fields of competence. In this August, three major international days are celebrated, which are, International Day of the World Indigenous People (9 August), International Youth Day

(12 August) and International Day for the Remembrance of the Slave Trade and its Abolition (23 August). I am sure that many National Commissions were involved in and have contributed to these celebrations within their national context. Related information, including the message of the Director-General issued on these occasions, can be found in advance on UNESCO Websites [www.unesco.org](http://www.unesco.org) and [www.unesco.int](http://www.unesco.int). Special assistance and/or communication materials could be provided upon request when you intend to organize a national celebration event.

Another important event is being prepared for coming September is the celebration of International Literacy Day (8 September). The theme for this year's world-wide celebration is Literacy and Peace. On this day, UNESCO awards innovative literacy programmes in recognition of excellent and inspiring experiences in the field of literacy throughout the world. Please note that the ILD celebration together with the award ceremony will take place in New Delhi, India, within the framework of an International Conference organized by the Indian authorities on 'Women's Literacy for Inclusive and Sustainable Development' from 8 to 10 September. While these events will be conducted in India, the week of the ILD will be also celebrated at UNESCO Headquarters through the inauguration of a photographic exhibition that will present this year's prize winners.

I count on your support in making this year's International Literacy Day a success by advocating in favour of literacy, peace and social cohesion and by demonstrating stronger commitment in creating literate societies for the well-being of all.

#### **Upcoming UNESCO Publications**

- "Water and Climate Dialogue: Adapting to climate change, why we need broader and 'out-of-the-box' approaches", being published in English by the Science Sector

It aims to bring the water agenda more fully into the international debate on climate change. It promotes debate on the urgent need to adapt the management of water to the imperatives of climate change. This publication will be available in print and online, and will be launched during the World Water Week, the annual meeting place for the most urgent water-related issues, that will take place this year in Stockholm on 21-27 September 2011.

- "Apprentissage à la démocratie des jeunes tunisiens", being published in French and Arabic by UNESCO Rabat Office in coordination with the Social and Human Sciences Sector

This publication will target 18-24 year-old Tunisians issued from vulnerable areas. Its intended purpose is to support knowledge and capacity development of the young people's right to vote and participate in democratic processes. This timely publication will be distributed for free by the Tunisian Ministry of Education, local NGOs, women and youth associations and UNESCO Clubs. It will complement training sessions to be held between 15 September and 15 October 2011 in Tunisia in preparation of the forthcoming national elections.

- "Rankings and Accountability in Higher Education: Uses and Misuses", a upcoming publication in English and French by the Education Sector

Since the 1990s, interest in rankings has risen sharply across the world. A plethora of rankings now exists—global, regional and single-country rankings—with very diverse criteria, and there is evidence that this situation is reshaping higher education while influencing the decisions of students, employers, academic and industry partners as well as policy-makers. This publication will be published in December 2011 both in print

and electronic format. It will be the first in the new series entitled "Issues and Trends in Education Today", a collection of short research-based discussions on the current issues and critical challenges that will shape the future of education.

### **Recent appointments of Presidents and Secretaries-General of the National Commissions**

I should warmly welcome the newly-established Tokelau National Commission for UNESCO to the world family of National Commissions, which totals now to 197. Below is the list of newly appointed Presidents and Secretaries-General:

- In Tokelau, Hon. Elesi Kerisiano Kalolo and Ms Hatesa Kirfi were appointed in July 2011 as Chair and Secretary-General of the new Tokelau National Commission.
- In Chile, Mr Felipe Bulnes Serrano became President in July 2011, succeeding Mr Joaquín Lavín Infante.
- In Viet Nam, Mr Pham Cao Phong became Secretary-General in August 2011, succeeding Mr Pham Sanh Chau.

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Eric Falt', written in a cursive style.

Eric Falt