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REPORT ON UNESCO'S PARTICIPATION IN THE PREPARATIONS FOR A POST-2015 DEVELOPMENT AGENDA

SUMMARY

Per 190 EX/Decision 7 Part (I), the Executive Board “*invited the Director-General, in consultation with Member States, to present to it at its 191st session a report on UNESCO’s participation in the processes for preparation of the post-2015 development agenda, and on the overall strategy of the Organization to influence the shaping of this agenda in general, and on UNESCO’s advocacy efforts for education in this specific context*” (para 9). The present document aims at responding to this request.

Action expected of the Executive Board: proposed decision in paragraph 25.

Background

1. Per 190 EX/Decision 7 Part (I), the Executive Board “*invited the Director-General, in consultation with Member States, to present to it at its 191st session a report on UNESCO’s participation in the processes for preparation of the post-2015 development agenda, and on the overall strategy of the Organization to influence the shaping of this agenda in general, and on UNESCO’s advocacy efforts for education in this specific context*” (para 9). The present document aims at responding to this request.

2. Focusing on the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and other internationally agreed development goals by 2015 is a priority. The more the world can collectively achieve on the important goals set by 2015, the more it will be possible to build confidence and support for a bold and ambitious post-2015 development agenda. A multitude of interlinked processes are currently on the way to arrive at a comprehensive internationally agreed development agenda. On the one hand, the new development agenda should build on the Millennium Declaration, the achievements of the MDGs and address the remaining implementation gaps of the MDGs. On the other hand, it should also address new and emerging challenges, and be bold and ambitious.

3. For UNESCO, proactive and effective engagement in preparing this agenda will be crucial in several respects: the post-2015 agenda will have a direct impact on UNESCO’s main programmatic documents, notably its eight-year medium-term strategy and its four-year programmes; at the same time, UNESCO is committed to integrating its areas of competence in the developing post-2015 agenda.

Shaping a post-2015 global development agenda

4. As mentioned above, several inter-linked processes have been launched aimed at shaping a post-2015 development agenda. Member States have given clear directions at the MDG Summit in 2010 and at the Rio+20 Conference in 2012 on how the processes for preparing for the post-2015 United Nations development agenda should unfold:

- (a) the United Nations Secretary-General has established a multi-layered process including: (i) the High-level Panel (HLP) of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda; (ii) the United Nations Task Team on Post-2015; (iii) national and global thematic consultations led by the United Nations Development Group; (iv) Regional consultations lead by the Regional Commissions; (v) the business sector consultation through the United Nations Global Compact; and (vi) the science and technology commission through the Sustainable Development Solutions Network. Civil society should be involved across all work streams;
- (b) In follow-up to the Rio+20 Conference, Member States have initiated a number of processes towards the definition of a new global agenda. Central to these has been the establishment of an open working group (OWG) tasked with developing sustainable development goals (SDGs). The group has now been constituted and is expected to submit its report during the 68th session of the General Assembly in September 2013. Further relevant outcomes of the Rio conference include the appointment of a committee of 30 experts on sustainable development finance, and the establishment of a High-Level Political Forum on sustainable development.

5. It has been underlined that while it is important to allow the various processes to progress and mature on their own separate tracks, there is broad support for one cohesive and coherent post-2015 development agenda, with one comprehensive set of related goals.

UNESCO's participation in developing a post-2015 global development agenda

6. Education, the sciences, culture, and communication and information are critical and strategic drivers for a comprehensive development agenda built on sustainability, equality and human rights. The Organization's strategy for participation in work on a post-2015 development agenda includes:

- Broad in-house consultations through a Steering Committee on post-2015, involving Programme Sectors, central services and comprising Headquarters and field office colleagues, chaired by ADG/BSP;
- Active involvement in the different streams of the Post-2015 Development Agenda processes at the global, regional and national levels (see below for more details);
- Production of think pieces and in-depth papers on relevant thematic areas for dissemination to relevant stakeholders;
- Creation of a dedicated website on post-2015 providing a one-stop space on UNESCO's vision and ongoing involvement (English: <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/post-2015/>; French: <http://www.unesco.org/new/fr/post-2015/>) as well as of other communications material.

Global/inter-agency level

7. Rio+20 recognized many of UNESCO's objectives as central. Its Outcome document and follow-up processes are a solid basis to build upon for the post-2015 development agenda. Rio+20 reaffirmed universal access to primary education and quality education at all levels as "essential for achieving sustainable development." It underlined the vital importance of education for sustainable development, and recognized the centrality of the sciences for sustainability. It identified water, oceans and biodiversity as thematic areas and cross-sectoral issues. The Outcome document furthermore highlighted the importance of ICTs and broadband for sustainable development and noted the importance of cultural diversity, cultural tourism and also indigenous knowledge. The outcome of Rio+20 also provides strong support for the preparations of the programme framework to follow on from the United Nations Decade for Education for Sustainable Development (DESD, 2005-2014), which constitutes a key part of the post-2015 agenda. In the post-2015 process, UNESCO aims at building on the recognition of its areas of competence through Rio+20.

8. UNESCO is an active contributor to all important mechanisms and groups that have been or tasked with developing input into the post-2015 process at the global/ inter-agency levels. These include notably the United Nations System Task Team (UNTT) on the Post-2015 United Nations Development Agenda, the UNDG MDG Task Force; UNDG Task Force on Culture and Development as well as the Inter-agency and Expert Group on MDG Indicators (IAEG).

9. The **UNTT on the Post-2015 United Nations Development Agenda** assembles representatives from United Nations entities and international organizations under the co-chairmanship of UNDP and UN-DESA to provide a common vision from the United Nations system on the Post-2015 Development Agenda. UNESCO has substantially contributed to the UNTT Report, "Realizing the Future We Want for All", which was issued in June 2012, notably through the drafting of dedicated think pieces on Education and Culture and by contributing to think pieces on Science, Technology and Innovation and Intellectual Property Rights as well as Governance and Development. The United Nations report and the associated think pieces are now serving as the reference for all system-wide consultations and debates on the post-2015 development agenda. UNESCO is also an active member of all subgroups of the UNTT such as the Technical Support Team which is tasked to provide initial inputs to the Open Working Group on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

10. In addition, the United Nations system is conducting a series of **Global Thematic Consultations** with academia, media, the private sector, employers and trade unions, civil society and others to discuss key issues pertaining to the Post-2015 Development Agenda.¹ UNESCO and UNICEF are co-leading the Global Thematic Consultation on Education. As part of this consultation an Education Online Platform has been established and ensuing e-discussions were launched in December 2012. Running through to March 2013, the moderated e-discussions concentrate on four specific areas: (1) Equitable Access to Education (10-24 December 2012); (2) Quality of Learning (8-21 January 2013); (3) Global Citizenship, Skills and Jobs (23 January-6 February); (4) Governance and Financing of Education (10-24 February). The overall objective of the consultation on education is to generate an inclusive process and discussion around the importance of increased priority and investments for quality basic and post-basic education in the post-2015 agenda. The Director-General presented the Global Thematic Consultation on Education to Member States at the United Nations (New York, 5 March 2013). She also participated in the launch of the exhibition “Journeys to School” at the United Nations Headquarters, which was organized by UNESCO and partners and opened by the UNSG.

11. Specific objectives for UNESCO in relation to these processes include:

- stimulating discussion and critical analysis on how EFA and the MDG 2 on education and MDG 3 on gender equality as well as ESD have supported progress in education and equity, to identify remaining gaps and new issues, and to generate consensus on how best to reflect education, training and learning in the post-2015 development framework;
- examining a range of policy options and responses (at local, national and international level) and how this evidence might be deployed to inform the post-2015 development agenda;
- developing ideas about how progress towards greater education quality and equity can be measured, including how and what goals and targets need to be defined and owned and governments made accountable for them, and;
- calling attention to the need to secure the collective commitment of governments, representatives of employers and labour, corporate leaders, civil society organizations and the public to ensure that investments in basic and post-basic education and training are predictable, sustained, adequate and efficient in terms of equipping young people with the skills they need.

12. UNESCO is contributing actively to the **Global Thematic Consultation on Water** by providing inputs to the consultations on the three ‘streams’: water, sanitation and hygiene; water resources management; and wastewater management and water quality. The UNESCO contributions, with specific emphasis on water security, are based around the main focus areas defined in the Strategic Plan of the 8th phase of the International Hydrological Programme (IHP-VIII) for 2014-2021, as well as on the areas in which UNESCO-IHP has strong expertise and a leading role at the international level. These include innovative approaches to climate change adaptation with respect to water resources, water-related natural disasters, wastewater management and water quality, transboundary waters, water in an urbanized world, water education and capacity building, and gender mainstreaming in water management. UNESCO has mobilized its network of IHP National Committees, water-related centres and Chairs to actively contribute to the global Thematic Consultation on Water and national consultation processes of the post-2015 development agenda. UNESCO participated actively in the Post-2015 Consultation on Water Resources Management and Wastewater Management and Water Quality (Geneva, 27–28 February).

¹ The Global Thematic Consultations cover eleven areas: Education; Water; Environmental Sustainability; Inequalities; Conflict, Violence and Disaster; Health; Governance; Growth and Employment; Population Dynamics; Food and Nutrition Security; Energy.

13. UNESCO is further substantially contributing to the **Global Thematic Consultation on Environmental Sustainability** as a member of its steering committee. It has, inter alia, provided an intersectoral paper for the e-discussions and contributed to the planning of the Leadership Meeting to be held 18-19 March in Costa Rica. UNESCO has also provided input and comments to the other global thematic consultations, for example through papers on media, disaster risk reduction and indigenous people.

14. The Organization is participating as a member of the **UNDG MDG Task Force** in the preparation of two synthesis reports which will be based on the findings of the Global Thematic, National and Regional Consultations, and are expected to inform the HLP of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda, the OWG on SDGs and the United Nations General Assembly.

15. Other relevant initiatives include the establishment of a **UNDG Task Team on Culture and Development**, which was established by the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) in September 2012, chaired by ADG/CLT. Aiming to enhance the contribution of culture to the United Nations sustainable development agenda and its implementation at country-level, the UNDG Task Team is expected to make a substantial contribution to the Post-2015 process. UNESCO furthermore engages with the **United Nations Sustainable Development Solutions Network (UNSDSN)**, an independent international network aiming to mobilize scientific and technical expertise from academia, civil society, and the private sector, led by Jeffrey Sachs, in support of sustainable-development problem solving.

Regional and country levels

16. Committed to an inclusive stakeholder-driven process, and based on the lesson learned that the MDG agenda has at times been perceived as having been too “top-down”, UNDG undertakes broad based **regional and national consultations on the post-2015 development agenda**. At the regional level, the United Nations Regional Commissions have convened and are planning a series of inclusive subregional and regional consultations to develop and articulate regional perspectives on the post-2015 development agenda. At the country level, national consultations in up to 100 countries are undertaken to help shaping the post-2015 Development Agenda. UNESCO, particularly through its presence in the field, is actively participating in these consultations.

17. The following are selected examples of UNESCO’s action at the regional and country-levels.

- UNESCO Bangkok organized the meeting “Beyond 2015 – Rethinking Learning in a Changing World” (November), with the support from the Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology. UNESCO Bangkok has been engaging with youth organizations in Myanmar in the possible development of a National Youth Policy for Myanmar that would prepare the country for the post-MDG future.
- UNESCO Jakarta has organized youth consultations in Indonesia (Jakarta, November 2012), and participated in the ASEM Ministerial Conference for Culture (Yogyakarta, September 2012), the 5th ASIAN Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (Yogyakarta, October, 2012), the Global Youth Forum (Bali, December 2012) and HLP of Eminent Persons Regional Consultations (Bali, December 2012).
- UNESCO Montevideo is participating in the Post-2015 discussions in the framework of UNDG LAC and the ICSU regional office. Together with the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) it is preparing a paper on science and technology capacities for a Post-2015 Development Agenda.

- UNESCO Santiago has set up an inter-agency Working Group with ECLAC (CEPAL) for the joint design of the post-2015 educational agenda for LAC since September 2012. Several studies and events have been undertaken jointly e.g. the launch of the GMR in October 2012. The Group is being expanded to include other United Nations agencies, NGOs, Foundations and the private sector.
- UNESCO Venice through its involvement as a member of the United Nations Development Group for Europe and Central Asia is contributing to the development of a regional advocacy document for the ECE countries as a regional-level follow-up to the global document, “The Future We Want”. UNESCO Venice provides input to the national consultations in the Eastern Europe and Central Asia region through UNCT.
- UNESCO Addis Ababa supports the post-2015 national consultation process in Ethiopia. A national task team is preparing for the final national consultation, scheduled to be held in Addis Ababa in February 2013. UNESCO has been part of the process by providing technical inputs to the background documents.
- The UNESCO Amman Office led a two-day national consultation on education post-2015 for Jordan, bringing together youth, teachers, parents, civil society groups and policy makers from across the country.

Further related advocacy efforts:

18. In order to strengthen and integrate its education-related engagement, the Organization has **placed the post-2015 debate on the agenda of Education for All (EFA) meetings** and networks. Four regional consultations on EFA with as special focus on the post-2015 have taken place in the Arab States (Sharm el-Sheikh, 16-19 October 2012), Africa (Johannesburg, 16-20 October 2012), Latin American and the Caribbean (Mexico City, 29-30 January) and Asia and the Pacific (Bangkok, 26-27 February 2013). UNESCO also organized a consultation with some 150 Education NGOs during the global meeting of the Collective Consultation of NGOs on EFA (CCNGO; Paris, 24-26 October 2012). During the Global Education for All Meeting (GEM; Paris, 21-23 November 2012), a side event was organized and facilitated by UNESCO and UNICEF. In the context of the Global Thematic Consultation on Education, a Global Meeting will be held (Dakar, 18-19 March, 2013) to provide a face-to-face dialogue opportunity for key stakeholders. At this meeting, the results of the on-going consultations and draft recommendations will be discussed with decision makers from government, the UNSG HLP of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda, and other key education stakeholders. The expectation is that key recommendations will be defined during the meeting and taken forward by these decision-makers to champion in the intergovernmental discussions to follow over the next two years.

19. With the **EFA Global Monitoring Report**, education has been subject to monitoring since 2002, which represents a solid basis for assessing progress. In line with the Dakar Framework for Action, UNESCO has initiated the process of countries preparing national **EFA 2015 reviews** in 2013 and 2014. This will be an occasion to take stock of progress and identify national challenges and needs to lay the foundation for education policies post-2015 at country-level. These reports, complemented by studies and technical documents, will inform regional meetings that will take place in the second half of 2014. The resulting regional reports will be part of the background documents for a global conference on education in 2015 hosted by the Republic of Korea. The EFA process will also inform and influence the broader post-2015 process. In the lead up to 2015, it will be critical to keep education high on the post-2015 agenda. This will be done by strengthened advocacy for education as part of the ‘last big push’ for education. The **UNSG’s Global Education First Initiative (GEFI)** launched in 2012 will be one of the key mechanisms to galvanize stronger advocacy and support from world leaders in placing education at the centre of the post-2015 agenda. Developing the post-2015 agenda also requires undertaking consultations with the various sub-regions in order to capture the highly diverse nature of the region. Other types of consultation processes, including consultations and discussion forums on specific topics with

regards to the post-2015 agenda are planned within the framework of the thematic consultation on education, for which UNESCO and UNICEF have set up a joint regional Task Team for the Asia Pacific Region.

20. UNESCO will ensure that **gender equality** is a constituent element of the global education agenda post-2015 with a focus on “equality of opportunity” as well as “equality of outcome”. To address the priorities of Africa in the post-2015 agenda, UNESCO will especially draw on GEFI and the Nairobi Declaration on the Development of Science, Technology and Innovation in Africa.

21. The **UNSG’s Scientific Advisory Board** with its secretariat to be hosted at UNESCO will be launched in the lead up to the 2015 MDG target date and the post-2015 development agenda process and it is expected to provide pertinent advice. UNESCO also plans the production a number of position papers on the role of **science and engineering** in sustainable development. The UNESCO-led **International Year of Water Cooperation** seeks to strengthen international cooperation among institutions, users, social and economic sectors and others in order to reach a consensus on Goals for the post-2015 era which will effectively address our future water needs. A position paper on water and the post-2015 Development Agenda is currently under preparation. UNESCO will actively participate in meetings related to the **Ocean** as a follow-up of Rio+20, the Secretary-General’s Oceans Compact and in preparation of the third International Conference on the Sustainable Development of SIDS to be hosted in Samoa in 2014.

22. 2013 will be marked by a series of high-level events and milestones demonstrating the role of **Culture for Sustainable Development** in order to further advocate for the inclusion of culture in the post-2015 agenda. In May 2013, the Hangzhou International Congress will be the first international meeting on the subject organized by UNESCO since the Stockholm Conference in 1998, at the level of the United Nations and with the participation of leaders and experts from the global community at large. Furthermore, the President of the 67th United Nations General Assembly has decided to convene a Thematic Debate on Culture for Sustainable Development, which, together with the 2013 ECOSOC Annual Ministerial Review on “Science, Technology and Innovation, and the Potential of Culture, for Promoting Sustainable Development and Achieving the Millennium Development Goals”, scheduled for July 2013, will represent key milestones, at the political level, to contribute to the post-2015 debate. The third edition of the Creative Economy Report, to be jointly published by UNESCO and UNDP by the summer of 2013, will also represent an opportunity to highlight the contribution of culture to the attainment of MDGs and more broadly to sustainable development. In the autumn of 2013, Indonesia, with UNESCO as a partner, will organize the first World Culture in Development Forum. This will also represent a key event contributing to the future agenda. Finally, the United Nations Secretary-General will also submit a report, whose preparation will be led by UNESCO, to the United Nations General Assembly, which is expected to discuss a resolution on Culture and Development.

23. Regarding **knowledge societies** UNESCO will build on the first WSIS+10 Review event (Paris, 25 - 27 February 2013) which invited stakeholders to ensure that the lessons learned during the WSIS review processes inform, as appropriate, the formulation of development goals post 2015, as well as to report on the WSIS implementation within the framework of the WSIS process, facilitating elaboration of the vision beyond 2015.

24. The World Social Science Report 2013 will contribute to the social science knowledge base on social transformations and environmental change and will serve for advocacy to highlight the link between sustainable development and **social inclusion**. UNESCO plans to further strengthen a comprehensive vision on **youth** across the Organization which essentially consists of enabling youth to engage proactively in sustainable development and peace.

Proposed decision

25. The Executive Board may wish to adopt the following draft decision:

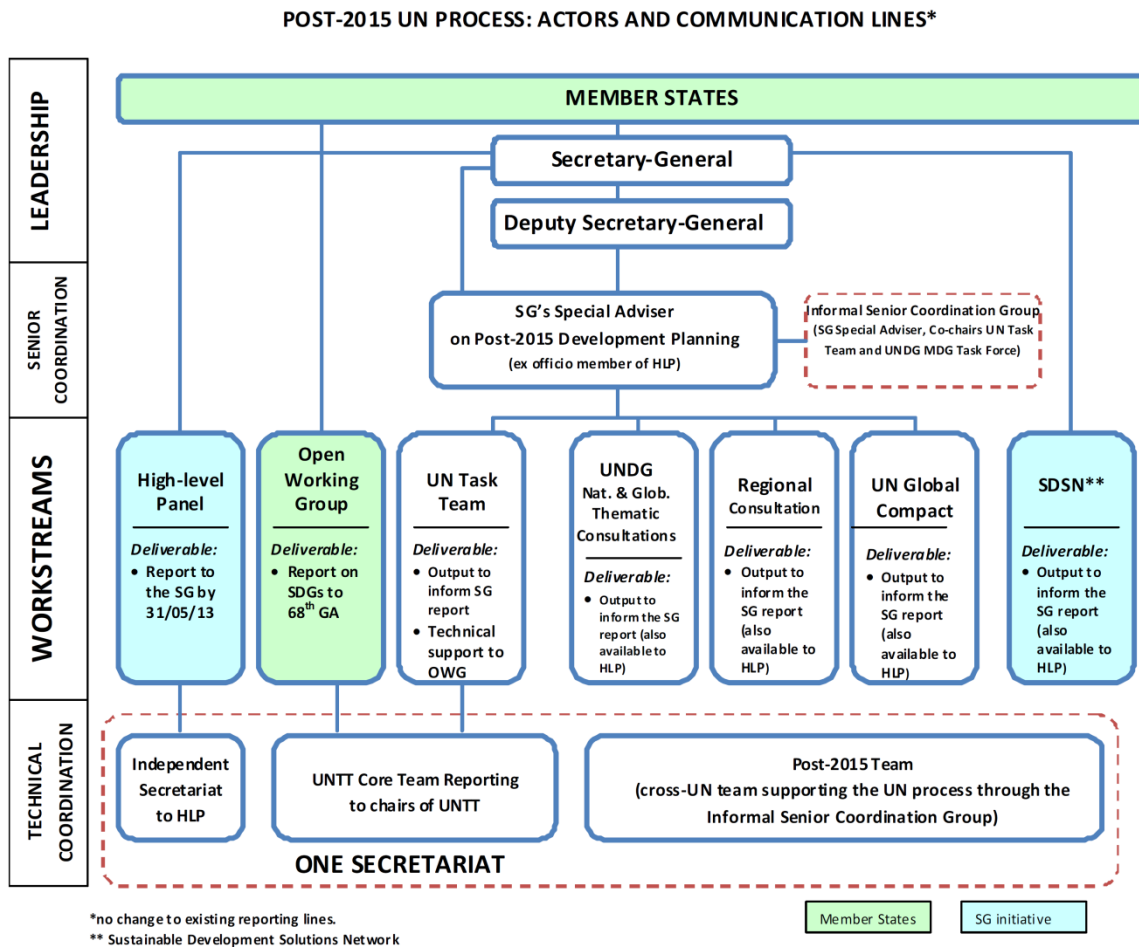
The Executive Board,

1. Having examined document 191 EX/6,
2. Recognizing the importance for UNESCO to actively engage in the processes leading to the elaboration of a post-2015 development agenda, so it be reflective of the contributions of education, the sciences, culture, and communication and information ,
3. Expresses its appreciation to the Director-General for the manifold initiatives already initiated and underway at the global, regional and country levels, highlighting UNESCO's priorities and thematic competences;
4. Invites the Director-General to report to the Executive Board at its 192nd session on the Organization's engagement and further developments regarding the post-2015 development agenda

Annex**I. Milestones in the Post-2015 Development Process:**

Date	Delivery
Throughout 2013	National Consultations
14 March 2013	First Meeting of the Open Working Group on SDGs
Until March 2013	Global Thematic Consultations
March 2013	First UNDG Synthesis Report on Post-2015 Consultations
May 2013	Report by the High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda will submit its report to the United Nations Secretary-General
September 2013	Second UNDG Synthesis Report on Post-2015 Consultations
September 2013	Report by Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals
September 2013	UNSG's report for the 68th General Assembly Session

II. Post-2015 United Nations Process: Actors and Communication Lines:



III. Selected events related to post-2015 (co-)organized by UNESCO:

Date	Location	Event
11 February 2013	Paris	International Year of Water Cooperation 2013: Launch Event
19 February 2013	Amman	Making education relevant to the workplace for Youth in Jordan
20 February 2013	Jakarta	Post-2015 In-Country Consultations: National Dialogue on Youth
22 February 2013	Jakarta	Inequalities
25-27 February 2013	Paris	2013 WSIS +10 review meeting “Towards Knowledge Societies for Peace and Sustainable Development”
26-27 February 2013	Bangkok	13th Regional Meeting of National EFA Coordinators: The Big Push
27 February-15 March 2013	Online	E-discussions on the theme of the 2013 ECOSOC AMR “Science, technology and innovation, and the potential of culture – and related national and international policies – in promoting sustainable development and achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)”
28 February-1 March 2013	Bangkok	Regional Thematic Consultation on Education in the Post-2015 Development Agenda, preceded by preparatory mini consultations undertaken by non-governmental organizations or national/regional networks
18-19 March 2013	Dakar	Global Meeting of Global Thematic Consultation on Education
21-22 March 2013	Jakarta	World Water Day – Water Cooperation for the Post 2015 Agenda
24-26 March 2013	Nsukka	Science and Engineering Fair
4-5 April 2013	Jakarta	Sustainability Science: A Science based Approach to realise the Future We Want for All
18-19 April 2013	New York	Session at expert workshop “Oceans, Seas and Sustainable Development: Implementation and follow-up to Rio+20”
23 April 2013	New York	ECOSOC 2013 Partnership Event – Partnership Clinic: “Innovation and Technology: Innovative Design Solutions to Address Extreme Poverty”
29-30 April	Paris	Meeting on Inclusive Wealth Report
Spring 2013		Coordinated meetings at country level to communicate on the results of the MDG-F Joint Programmes on Culture and Development

4-5 May 2013	Navoi	Round table on the role of culture as a driver and enabler of sustainable development
14-17 May 2013	New York	Workshop on the importance of Capacity Building and Marine Technologies Transfer to SIDS
15-17 May 2013	Hangzhou	International Congress of Hangzhou
19-23 May 2013	Geneva	Global Platform on Disaster Risk Reduction
3-4 June 2013	Zagreb	International meeting of experts on “Cultural diversity, civil society and international cooperation in South-East Europe”
12 June 2013	New York	Thematic Debate on Culture for Sustainable Development, convened by the President of the 67th United Nations General Assembly
July 2013	Geneva	ECOSOC Annual Ministerial Review on “Science, technology and innovation, and the potential of culture, for promoting sustainable development and achieving the Millennium Development Goals”
1-6 September 2013	Stockholm	Several Sessions during Stockholm Water Week
October 2013	Paris	Eighth UNESCO Youth Forum
November 2013	Rio de Janeiro	Sixth World Science Forum
24-29 November 2013	Bali	World Culture in Development Forum
2-6 December 2013	Ethiopia	African Ministerial Meeting on Engineering and Technology