

UNESCO
199th session of the Executive board
Implementation of Standard-setting instruments
General Monitoring (Committee on conventions and recommendations)

Contributions from the ED Sector

ED standard-setting instruments

1. After the adoption, by Executive Board, of the strategy on standard-setting instruments developed to enhance visibility, cooperation, monitoring, ratification and implementation of ED normative instrument within the context of Education 2030 agenda, the Secretariat started its implementation while developing, as requested by the Board, additional road map on the strategy implementation and an action plan on the Observatory on the right to education. As requested by the Executive Board, these documents are submitted to the present session.

2. In addition, as stipulated in the strategy and requested by the Committee's members, a special session during the meetings of the CR Committee is devoted to a diagnosis on the right to education status worldwide by the Special rapporteur on the right to education. During this session the Special rapporteur is invited to present the situation of the right to education and discuss problems faced by Member States. This session will facilitate the interaction between the members of the CR and the Special rapporteur and will provide the opportunity to have an in-depth discussion on the status of the right to education and on latest developments in this field.

Convention against Discrimination in Education (1960) and Recommendation against Discrimination in Education (1960)

3. Based on the analysis of challenges encountered by Member States in implementing the 1960 Convention and Recommendation, provided during the 195th session of the Executive Board, the Secretariat's action, during the period under review, sought to continue addressing the difficulties reported. Efforts towards reinforcing the monitoring and enhancing advocacy in relation to State's legal obligations under the Convention continued. Regarding the main activities carried out, in terms of monitoring, the Secretariat worked on the launching the 9th Consultation on the 1960 Convention and Recommendation. As requested by the Executive Board, the reporting guidelines were finalized after a formal consultation with the Members of the Executive Board, organised in Nov. 2015. The formal launching took place through a circular Letter by the Director General, and the launching of the online platform for Member states reporting, developed in order to encourage the participation of the maximum of Member States, to facilitate the submission process and for cost-effectiveness. Follow up to the 8th Consultation on the Convention and recommendation against discrimination in education also continued. After the publication of three thematic mappings, the second publication of the compendium of practical examples in implementing the right to education is being published. In parallel, follow-up to the ratification campaign launched by the Director General was ensured in order to increase the mobilisation. A series of practical tools and material on the ratification process was prepared in three languages in order to encourage Member States and assist them in the process. Moreover, the Secretariat pursued the implementation of the strengthened approach adopted in terms of reporting, notably in the context of participating in the Universal periodic review. This will be even further reinforced in the framework of the implementation of the

Strategy on standard-setting instruments. In terms of promotion, advocacy and reinforcement of capacities, within the context of assisting Member States in strengthening the foundation of the right to education in national legal systems, and after the publication of the Guidelines for reviewing national legislation and policies in the field of right to education, this tool was tested in two countries, including series of national level consultations for the preparation of reports. A third country in Africa is now envisaged for the pilot testing. Regarding the research component, significant work on privatisation of education and its impact was carried out in collaboration with partners. In addition, a policy paper on the challenges of private education in light of the existing international legal framework (entitled: *Investments in private education: undermining or contributing to the full development of the human right to education*) was published to contribute to the global discussions on this issue. Regarding the database on the right to education, during the reporting period, approximately 15 country profiles have been updated. Interesting inputs for the updating are also received notably from Members States and field offices. An action plan for the updating and further development of the database (notably the upgrading to an observatory on the right to education) is being defined. Finally, work on the protection of the right to education of refugees and asylum-seekers has been initiated.

4. All these activities seek to respond to the challenges raised by Member States. They are likely to have sound impact: the review guidelines would help create a demand from Member states for education law reform; the database would help ensure accountability and transparency and foster regional and international cooperation; its development into a global Observatory would help promote further the right to education; the ratification campaign will help maintain the momentum built up over the past few years; the tools based on the 8th Consultation are highly important for information-sharing and advocacy; all the awareness raising activities are key to the role that the right to education and normative action would play in the implementation and monitoring of Education 2030; the participation in UPR is crucial in ensuring a reinforced monitoring of the right to education; finally the Strategy would help provide more visibility and ensure a better monitoring and implementation of standard-setting instruments in the context of Education 2030. They are conceived in such a way that there are mutual benefits and all are intended to assist Member States to address the challenges that the implementation of the right to education generates.

Convention on Technical and Vocational Education (1989) and Revised Recommendation on Technical and Vocational Education and Training (2015)

5. Pursuant to 190 EX/Decision 24 (III), the monitoring of the 1989 Convention and the 2001 Revised Recommendation had been delayed pending a possible revision of their texts. The 37th session of the General Conference had invited the Director-General to submit to it, at its 38th session, a draft revised Recommendation concerning Technical and Vocational Education, reflecting new trends and issues in technical and vocational education and training (37 C/Resolution 17).

6. In accordance with the Rules of Procedure concerning recommendations to Member States and international conventions covered by the terms of Article IV, paragraph 4 of the Constitution, the Director-General submitted the final report containing a draft text of the Revised Recommendation concerning Technical and Vocational Education, proposed to be titled "Recommendation concerning Technical and Vocational Education and Training" to the General Conference at its 38th session.

7. The draft text was examined by the Education Commission during its 5th debate together with the draft text of the Recommendation on Adult Learning and Education. Twenty-two

Member States and five observers took the floor. Broad support for the revision of both Recommendations was expressed, welcoming the suggested changes to the texts, which were deemed to accurately reflect the realities and challenges, as well as national priorities. Both Recommendations were considered, as new international standards, crucial to accompany the implementation of Education 2030.

8. Member States expressed their satisfaction with the consultation processes and commended UNESCO and UIL for the synergies they enabled during the development of both texts, and the comprehensiveness, depth and innovativeness of the consultations.

9. The importance of developing lifelong learning, including through the recognition, validation and accreditation of non-formal and informal learning, through the establishment of national qualifications frameworks and through the development of learning pathways and permeable systems was emphasised several times by Member States, commending the perspectives of the Recommendations. Member States appreciated that both Recommendations underline the importance of intersectoral policies, of inter-ministerial work and of involving various stakeholders.

10. The General Conference adopted the Recommendation concerning Technical and Vocational Education and Training, which supersedes the 2001 Revised Recommendation, and recommended that Member States apply the provisions of this Recommendation by taking appropriate steps, including whatever legislative or other measures may be required, in conformity with the constitutional practice and governing structures of each State, to give effect within their territories to the principles of this Recommendation. The General Conference further recommended that Member States bring this Recommendation to the attention of the authorities and bodies responsible for TVET, and also other stakeholders concerned with TVET, and requested the Director General to report to the 40th session of the General Conference, on the status of Member States' implementation of this Recommendation (38 C/Resolution 14).

11. According to the Rules of Procedure mentioned above the text of the Recommendation concerning Technical and Vocational Education and Training was authenticated by the signatures of the President of the General Conference and of the Director-General and transmitted to Member States.

12. The two normative instruments concerning TVET will be formally associated for monitoring, which has now resumed. As provided for in the Strategy on standard-setting instruments in the field of education (2015-2021) (adopted by 197EX/Dec.20 VIII), the new Recommendation being the most up-to-date normative instrument concerning TVET, the monitoring of the implementation of the 1989 Convention will be conducted with reference to the provisions contained in the new Recommendation. The draft guidelines for the preparation of reports by Member States on the application of these normative instruments will be submitted to the Executive Board in 2018.

13. The adoption of the Recommendation concerning Technical and Vocational Education and Training is timely as it will inform Member States' implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The Strategy on standard-setting instruments in the field of education and the new Strategy for TVET (2016-2021), submitted to this session of the Executive Board, should support the visibility, implementation and monitoring of the Recommendation. Indeed the Recommendation will inform UNESCO's work with Member States, including TVET policy reviews and capacity development. The monitoring of the implementation of the Recommendation will inform the mid-term review of the new Strategy for TVET.

Recommendation on the Development of Adult Education (1976) and Revised Recommendation on Adult Learning and Education (2015).

14. The **revision of the 1976 Recommendation** proceeded as planned. As indicated above, it was done in coordination with the revision of the 2001 Revised Recommendation concerning Technical and Vocational Education to ensure that the instruments will be mutually reinforcing in addressing key policy issues in particular on lifelong learning and adult continuing education, as well as other contemporary issues, in a consistent manner. The General Conference, at its 38th session in November 2015, adopted the Revised Recommendation on Adult Learning and Education, and, as mentioned above, Member States expressed their satisfaction with the consultation processes.

15. The General Conference further recommended that Member States bring this Recommendation to the attention of the authorities and bodies responsible for Adult Learning and Education, and also other stakeholders concerned with Adult Learning and Education, and requested the Director General to report to the 40th session of the General Conference, on the status of Member States' implementation of this Recommendation.

16. The text of the Recommendation concerning Adult Learning and Education was authenticated by the signatures of the President of the General Conference and of the Director-General and transmitted to Member States.

17. The definition of ALE reflects this shift while preserving key elements of the previous definition; e.g. concerning the different understandings of the concrete age that defines adulthood in different cultures. It highlights the function of ALE as a major building block of a learning society and for the creation of learning communities, cities and regions. The text refers to the concept of lifelong learning and underlines the overall aim of ALE, namely to ensure that all adults participate in their societies and the world of work. It takes into account the three key domains of adult learning and education: literacy and basic skills; continuing education and professional development; and education and learning opportunities for active citizenship, variously known as community, popular or liberal education, to empower people to engage with a wide range of social issues. The potential and supportive function of information and communication technologies (ICT) is underlined.

18. The foundational role of literacy as a continuum of learning and proficiency levels, providing the essential building block for a learning society, is reiterated together with its function for solving problems in an increasingly technological environment. The **need for a cross-sectoral approach** to adult learning and education is underlined, requiring cooperation between various ministries beyond education, not least in relation to health and employment. The Recommendation also reflects principles of adult learning, that learning should be based on partnership, represent a crucial means for inclusion of vulnerable and marginalized groups, and apply participatory approaches. The areas of action described in the set of concrete recommendations follow the logic of the *Belém Framework for Action*. This is helpful for further monitoring since the established mechanisms of the CONFINTEA process, including the *Global Report on Adult Learning and Education* (GRALE) based on triennial national reports, will serve as the principal instrument to monitor implementation of the Recommendation.

19. The consultation process revealed that the Recommendation is understood as a crucial instrument to highlight **the role of adult learning and education in the post-2015 agenda** of the United Nations. The text reflects this key purpose by relating to the principles of sustainable

development, as already underlined by the previous World Conferences on Adult Education (CONFINTEA V, 1997) and VI (2009). In a seminar on skills for life and work at UIL in summer 2014 which was organized by UIL together with the International Council of Adult Education (ICAE), the function of UNESCO'S Global Report on Adult Education (GRALE) for monitoring the recommendation was reiterated by stakeholders. In June 2015 the draft text was discussed together with the relevance of a revised normative UNESCO instrument for the European ALE community with input from the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL), in a conference organized by a network of the European Society on Research on the Education of Adults (ESREA) in Ljubljana (Slovenia). Participants praised UNESCO's rights-based approach to ALE.

Recommendation concerning Education for International Understanding, Co-operation and Peace and Education relating to Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (1974)

20. Following the adoption of the guidelines for the preparation of reports by Member States on the application of the Recommendation concerning Education for International Understanding, Co-operation and Peace and Education relating to Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (1974 Recommendation), the Secretariat will launch the sixth consultation for the period 2013-2016. The consolidated report on the results will be reviewed by the 202nd Executive Board and submitted to the 39th General Conference.

International reporting mechanisms, including the 1974 Recommendation, and their linkages with the 2030 Education agenda were also discussed at an Expert Meeting organised by the Council of Europe on the "Assessment of progress in the area of citizenship and human rights education" in October 2015 in Strasburg, France. This was followed by the Annual meeting of the International Contact Group on Citizenship and Human Rights Education set up to ensure close co-operation among regional and international initiatives. UNESCO also took part in the international Seminar on Human Rights Education (HRE) organized by the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) Independent Permanent Human Rights Commission (IPHRC) in collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Indonesia to promote HRE within its Member States.

21. To further promote language education as a means of fostering international understanding, UNESCO will organise the International Mother Language Day on 22 February 2016 with a focus on the importance of language(s) of instruction with regard to learning outcomes in a quality education approach.

22. The publication on *Writing quality textbooks*, as part of the Toolkit "Revision/adaptation of curricula, school textbooks and other learning materials to remove cultural, religious and gender biased stereotypes" in the framework of the UNESCO/Saudi Project, will be disseminated to a sample of countries in the second quarter of 2016. It will be then monitored and its impact on textbooks development/revision evaluated in 2016.

UNESCO has continued to assist Member States to integrate Global Citizenship Education (GCED) including peace and human rights education (PHRE) in a number of regions and countries worldwide.

23. UNESCO organised a series of sub-regional orientation and capacity-building workshops for Central Asian countries, Latin American and Caribbean countries and Western African countries on Global Citizenship Education (GCED). The purpose of these workshops is to promote the integration of GCED into education systems, exchange experiences, network and identify regional priorities.

24. In the Arab region, countries have been sensitized on GCED including through two conferences on GCED in December 2015 in Khartoum, Sudan and Sharjah, United Arab Emirates. Regional tools have also been developed such as a teacher reference guide and learning course content at university level on peace and skill building.

25. In Asia and the Pacific, experiences of at least eight countries were exchanged to promote the integration of PHRE in policies and practices, in the framework of values' education (from Cambodia, Lao [People's Democratic Republic](#) and the Philippines) and the Happy Schools Project (Bhutan, India, Republic of Korea, Thailand, Viet Nam). The latter gave rise to the publication of a framework for Happy Schools including good practices. In addition, in Pakistan, PHRE was integrated in teacher training and education programmes in camps for internally displaced persons.

26. In Sub-Saharan African states, a sub-regional study was conducted on the impact of the integration of HRE including UNESCO materials, coordinated by the Documentation and Human Rights Centre of the University of Namibia. The report concluded that the integration of HRE into various subjects as well as the subject examination has laid a useful foundation for HRE and has become a core element of Namibia's education system. The Office is also preparing a UNESCO component for the UN joint Project on Conflict Resolution in Mozambique, including a consultation meeting with key actors on peace as well as capacity building of curriculum developers.

27. In Latin American countries, PHRE activities were carried out in at least four countries. In Guatemala, the capacities of students, teachers, supervisors, parents, local authorities, and civil society organizations were strengthened through 19 workshops on education for peace. A toolkit on PHRE was also developed, followed by the organisation of workshops for 360 teachers by the Ombudsman Office in the second half of 2015. In cooperation with the Ombudsman's Office of Costa Rica and the National Human Rights Commission of Honduras, UNESCO organised two capacity-building workshops for policy-makers, curriculum developers, non-governmental actors and others on the *Teaching Respect for All* UNESCO tool in Costa Rica and Honduras in the first half of December 2015.

28. The UNESCO Associated Schools Network (ASPnet) around the world continued to undertake a large variety of activities for teaching and learning on human rights, sustainable development, peace and cultural diversity. The online collaborative platform ASPnet in Action "Global Citizens connected for Sustainable Development" is an effective tool for exchange, information and knowledge sharing among ASPnet schools worldwide. Drawing on the contributions of 1076 participants from 104 countries, a publication is being prepared to guide both students and teachers, in the ASPnet and beyond, on what it means to be a global citizen and how learners and teachers can contribute to sustainable development.

Recommendation on the Recognition of Studies and Qualification in Higher Education (1993)

29. UNESCO assesses the implementation of the 1993 Recommendation on the Recognition of Studies and Qualifications in Higher Education primarily through monitoring the implementation of the five regional and one inter-regional conventions.

30. Following the adoption in December 2014 of the **Revised Convention on the Recognition of Studies, Certificates, Diplomas, Degrees and Other Academic Qualifications in Higher Education in African States** (also known as the Addis convention), a meeting was held in July 2015 at UNESCO to prepare the implementation of the revised convention. Sixty-four experts from 30 African Member States and the Holy See, representatives of 6 international, regional and sub-regional organizations, Permanent Delegations to UNESCO and the African Union Commission adopted at the close of the meeting a Communiqué which recommends the establishment of an Informal Working Group for the implementation of the Addis Convention and asks UNESCO and the AUC to take steps to set up Group.

31. Comprised of representatives of Member States, the Informal Working Group is tasked to support actions regarding the ratification of the Addis Convention; its implementation; and capacity-building in quality assurance, recognition and qualifications frameworks. All Member States of the Africa Region and the Holy See were invited to designate a national focal point to serve on the Informal Working Group. At the end of 2015, 41 Member States of the Africa Region (out of 54) and the Holy See had confirmed the name of their focal point. UNESCO will pursue its action to ensure that all Member States concerned participate fully in the work of the Informal Working Group.

32. During the period under review, the first meeting of the Informal Working Group was organized on 12-13 January 2016, to discuss and adopt the mandate of the Group, its structures, working modalities, initial work plan and calendar of work. The proposal is that the Group works in 2016-2017 to support Member States to prepare for the implementation of the Addis Convention through the operationalization of the modalities decided upon in the text of the Convention. As indicated in the Communiqué adopted in July 2015, the mandate of the Working Group will include actions regarding the ratification of the Addis Convention; its implementation; as well as capacity-development initiatives.

33. In line with the **Regional Convention on the Recognition of Studies, Diplomas and Degrees in Higher Education in Asia and the Pacific** (1983 Convention), the Secretariat at UNESCO Bangkok continues to support Member States in the application and monitoring of the regional convention. During the period October 2015 through January 2016, UNESCO Bangkok focused on three main areas of support: i) regional capacity building activities; ii) developing policy advocacy materials; iii) preparing for the 14th Session of the Regional Committee.

34. During the 13th Session of the Regional Committee on the Recognition of Higher Education Qualifications in Asia and the Pacific, held in August 2014 in Colombo, Sri Lanka, Member States called on UNESCO to provide technical guidance on ratification procedures and, more broadly, to help raise awareness about the strategic importance of the Asia-Pacific regional conventions on the recognition of qualifications in higher education, including the 1983 Convention and the 2011 Revised Convention, which was adopted in Tokyo, Japan on 26 November 2011.

35. As a result of the 13th Session, from October 2015 through January 2016, UNESCO Bangkok conducted a series of activities to support the monitoring and application of the regional conventions. These activities include:

- Hosted a *Regional Capacity Building Workshop on the Recognition of Higher Education Qualifications in Asia and the Pacific* (21-23 October 2015).
- Convened a regional policy forum on *The Promotion of ASEAN Integration through Open and Distance Higher Education* (23-24 November 2015)

- Conducted a mission to Phnom Penh, Cambodia on the recognition of qualifications in higher education in Asia and the Pacific at the invitation of the Director General of Higher Education, Ministry of Education Youth and Sport, Cambodia (20-22 January 2016).

36. First, building on the request for capacity building at national level, UNESCO hosted a three-day interactive workshop from 21 to 23 October 2015 in Bangkok, Thailand for Member States and key stakeholders to review ratification procedures and assess the role of the regional conventions in the context of their national higher education systems, which were cited as key challenges in the Asia-Pacific region. To do so, basic principles related to the recognition of qualifications, partial studies, and qualifications held by refugees and other displaced persons were explored as part of a broader debate about implementation mechanisms, strategies and procedures for ratifying the regional conventions.

37. Building on the success of this interactive event, UNESCO Bangkok developed a work plan for country-level workshops on recognition in Asia and the Pacific.

38. Representatives from over 20 Member States throughout Asia and the Pacific joined the regional capacity building workshop. The workshop advanced policy advocacy efforts and raised awareness about the practical and strategic benefits of ratification and implementation of the regional conventions. In line with the workshop objectives, the regional capacity building workshop advanced three main objectives: i) UNESCO Bangkok conducted a pre-workshop survey to document needs and readiness levels of participating Member States related to the 1983 Convention and 2011 Revised Convention; ii) raised awareness about recognition issues in Asia-Pacific; and iii) built national-level capacity to ratify and implement regional recognition conventions. The capacity building workshop created an inclusive and open space to develop country-specific action plans related to ratification and implementation of the conventions.

39. With input from resource persons and facilitators, participants reported a deeper understanding of recognition issues and the necessary steps and technical procedures for ratification and implementation within their home countries. As a result, there was a greater number of regional champions with an understanding of key issues and new action plans to advance ratification and implementation of the regional conventions, including the 2011 Revised Convention. The workshop contributed as well to a shift in the discourse from “silent motivation to active engagement” on the recognition of qualifications in Asia and the Pacific.

40. UNESCO Bangkok offered the full support of the office to help Member States take forward their plans towards ratification and implementation. A demand-driven process was suggested that responds to country-specific priorities, including sending tailored letters of support from UNESCO Bangkok. In addition, UNESCO committed to help mobilize further resources to hold national consultations and conduct stakeholder meetings to help raise local awareness of the basic principles of mutual cooperation and policy tools to facilitate recognition and mobility.

41. As a result of these efforts, and in line with outcomes from the 13th Session of the Regional Committee, new policy advocacy materials were drafted to help raise awareness about the scope and importance of the regional conventions.

42. Second, UNESCO Bangkok, with support from ASEAN Cyber University, continued to facilitate a dialogue among different stakeholders of Open and Distance Learning (ODL) to promote cross-border provision and recognition of ODL-based higher education. The dialogue was built on a comprehensive review of challenges, lessons learned and promising practices of ODL in the ASEAN region. The goal was to determine the state-of-play of ODL recognition in

the ASEAN region and to determine how it can be tapped to promote regional cooperation. The forum was conducted from 23-24 November 2015 in Bangkok, Thailand and the resulting draft report is now circulating for comments and feedback before a planned publication in late 2016 or early 2017.

43. Third, UNESCO Bangkok staff undertook a mission to Phnom Penh, Cambodia from 20-22 January 2016. As a result of the October capacity building workshop, representatives in Cambodia initiated a national consultation process, which included technical support from UNESCO Bangkok. The national workshop explored the content and value of the regional conventions in the context of Cambodia. The goal of the workshop was to support Cambodia's national-level strategic planning, raise awareness among key stakeholders (i.e. higher education institutions, recognition authorities, and ministry officials), and explore ratification and implementation plans for the regional conventions.

44. To support further the monitoring and implementation of the regional conventions, UNESCO Bangkok will share outcomes from the regional capacity building workshop in October and continue to provide tailored advocacy materials, as needed.

45. Finally, UNESCO Bangkok began preparations for the 14th Session of the Regional Committee meeting which will be hosted by Australia in Sydney on 17-18 August 2016. Planning meetings are underway to further support regional cooperation and the recognition of higher education qualifications in Asia and the Pacific.

46. Within the framework of the **Lisbon Recognition Convention**, UNESCO continued supporting the work of the Bureau of the Convention, in its capacity as Co-Secretariat together with the Council of Europe. During this period, several documents that will be tabled with the 7th Meeting of the Lisbon Recognition Convention Committee (UNESCO, 29 February 2016) were finalized and transmitted to States Parties and relevant stakeholders in Europe for review in view of their adoption at the meeting. These include the draft Revised Recommendation on the recognition of joint degrees; the report on the implementation of the Lisbon Recognition Convention; and a Statement of the LRC Committee on the recognition of qualifications held by refugees, displaced persons and persons in a refugee-like situation.

47. This issue is also addressed by a Working Group established last November. Comprised of UNESCO, the Council of Europe, the European Commission, student and university associations and other relevant stakeholders, the Working Group will: take stock of the recognition of qualifications held by refugees, displaced persons and persons in a refugee-like situation in cooperation with the ENIC-NARIC; foster the exchange of information and good practices; discuss how to ensure that, once their qualifications are recognized, the realities of refugees are taken into consideration in education processes; finally, will prepare a conference on all these issues (i.e. recognition of qualifications; intercultural challenges; and actions against radicalization) and will discuss the feasibility of a standard-setting instrument or a political recommendation on these issues.

48. UNESCO contributes to the work of the Bologna Follow-up Group, in particular the Advisory Group on the revision of the Diploma Supplement, whose establishment was requested in the Yerevan Communiqué. The Advisory Group is mandated to support UNESCO, the Council of Europe and the European Commission to revise this document in cooperation with stakeholders. The first meeting of the Advisory Group will be hosted by Romania on 22 January 2016.

49. Convinced that the recognition of studies, titles and diplomas in Latin American and the Caribbean would ensure greater mobility of students and professionals throughout the Region, IESALC has continued sustaining its efforts to achieve the adherence of all Latin American and Caribbean States to the 1974 Regional Convention on the Recognition of Studies, Diplomas and Degrees in Higher Education in Latin America and the Caribbean. To contribute to fostering academic cooperation and accelerating regional development, as well as to make this convention a more operational normative instrument are the main concerns of UNESCO. In that sense, the updating of the 1974 UNESCO Regional Convention is crucial in order to ensure better linkage towards the global convention.

50. In this spirit, IESALC convened a High-Level Ministerial Meeting in Brasilia, Brazil, (October 8-9, 2015). Representatives of eighteen (18) Member States, as well as regional bodies working on recognition issues such as Convenio Andrés Bello, Organization of Ibero-American States and Organization of American States participated in the event. Also present were several university networks; RIACES (the regional quality assurance network); and some higher education institutions including the University of Chile, the University of Health Sciences of Porto Alegre and the University of Puebla.

51. Participants focused their discussions on the challenges faced by Member States in granting recognition, and the need for quality frameworks as a bridge between recognition and quality assurance was also emphasized. General issues raised included:

- i. the lack of continuity and follow-through on the part of governments and policy makers;
- ii. little uniformity across the Region;
- iii. regulatory instruments need to be developed and applied to bring some semblance of order into the system governing the recognition of studies so that processes are better articulated and systematized;
- iv. a review and revision of existing processes and procedures are necessary, very specially the 1974 Regional Convention on the Recognition of Studies, Diplomas and Degrees in Higher Education in Latin America and the Caribbean.

52. The High-Level Ministerial Meeting had positive outcomes, most notably the creation of a Working Group responsible for the revision and updating of the regional convention. The Working Group has been established and its first meeting will be held in La Havana (Cuba) on 17-18 February 2016, during the biannual congress “UNIVERSIDAD 2016”. It is expected that the Working Group will complete its work before next session of the General Conference of UNESCO (2017).

53. Pursuant to 37 C/Resolution and in accordance with the Rules of Procedures concerning recommendations to Member States and international conventions covered by the terms of Article IV, the Director General submitted the preliminary report 38 C/26 “Draft preliminary report Concerning the Preparation of a **Global Convention on the Recognition of Higher Education Qualifications**” to the 38th Session of the General Conference.

54. The General Conference took note of the Draft Preliminary Report (38C/26) concerning the preparation of a Global Convention, recalled the 37 C/Resolution 15, took note of the 197 EX/Decision 8 and adopted the following resolution:

“Having examined document 38 C/26 which presents a summary of the preliminary report concerning the preparation of a global convention on the recognition of higher education qualifications and the comments and observations of the Executive Board thereon,

1. *Reaffirms* that a global convention will improve academic and professional mobility, enhance international cooperation in higher education, and will represent a significant step forward towards global recognition and trust,
2. *Acknowledges* progress made regarding the revision of regional recognition conventions,
3. *Stresses* that the global convention should be built on, and will complement strong regional conventions, and not in any way weaken their achievements on the regional level,
4. *Requests* the Director-General to continue assisting Member States with the revision of existing regional conventions to ensure that they are sound and complementary, as necessary;
5. *Invites* the Director-General to continue the process of elaborating a global convention on the recognition of higher education qualifications;
6. *Further invites* the Director-General to convene a Drafting Committee (category VI meeting) to elaborate a preliminary draft of the global convention on the recognition of higher education qualifications and *requests* the Director-General to appoint the members of the Drafting Committee based on consultations with the Member States;
7. *Requests* the Director-General to consult Member States and relevant stakeholders on the preliminary draft of the global convention on the recognition of higher education qualifications in an inclusive manner through regional consultations including participation of experts from other regions;
8. *Encourages* Member States to provide financial resources to facilitate the consultation process, including the regional consultations;
9. *Requests* the Director-General to submit a progress report, accompanied by a preliminary draft of the convention on the recognition of higher education qualifications as well as a timetable according to UNESCO's rules of procedure concerning recommendations to Member States and international conventions covered by the terms of Article IV, paragraph 4, of the Constitution, to the 39th session of the General Conference (2017) for consideration and decision on further action."

55. As a follow-up, UNESCO is establishing a Drafting Committee, which will have the status of an expert committee, category VI, according to UNESCO Basic Texts (2014 Edition). A category VI committee is set up on an ad hoc basis to submit suggestions and advice to UNESCO on the preparation of a programme/project in a specific field. The report of the expert committee will be submitted to the Director-General. According to the rules and regulations set out in the basic texts, members of the expert committee shall serve in their private capacity. They will be appointed individually by the Director-General after consultations with the governmental authorities of Member States. Members of expert committees shall, as a general rule, be nationals of Member States or Associate Members of UNESCO or nationals of states which are not members of UNESCO, but members of the United Nations. The Director-General may invite other specialists to join the committee.

56. For the purpose of this Drafting Committee, each electoral group will be invited to nominate 3 representatives. From the suggested nominees, the Director-General will appoint the members of the Drafting Committee, taking into account gender, expertise and geographical balance.

57. The first meeting will be organized early spring 2016 to discuss the terms of reference, a roadmap and working modalities. 3 face-to-face meetings are foreseen and some online

consultations between the members of the Drafting Committee. The outcome of the Drafting Committee will be a report that will be handed over to the Director-General late spring 2017.

Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers (1966) and Recommendation concerning the Status of Higher-Education Teaching Personnel (1997)

58. Activities and measures adopted by the Secretariat to support Member States' implementation of the 1966 and 1997 Recommendations on Teaching Personnel are guided by pressing issues and trends identified by the joint ILO/UNESCO Committee of Experts on the Application of the Recommendations concerning Teaching Personnel (CEART) and its subsequent recommendations for action to governments, ILO and UNESCO. The CEART meets every three years. During its 12th Regular Session in Paris (20-24 April 2015) the Joint Committee, identified the following issues as important to consider in the Secretariat's assistance to Member States.

- Insufficient social dialogue among teachers, national governments and teacher organizations as part of teacher development policy-making that leads to quality teaching;
- The appraisal of teaching personnel must become a formative process linked to teachers' professional development;
- The professionalization of early childhood education personnel needs to be promoted and enhanced;
- The status of the teaching profession reflects inadequate teachers' working conditions and low quality teacher education
- Unequal access to and use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) limits the educational and professional opportunities of learners and teachers.
- The quality of teaching needs to be improved and monitored in the context of increasing non-public higher education providers;
- The professionalization of teaching in higher education needs to be strengthened with quality teaching and evaluation and promotion criteria related to research and teaching;

59. The CEART also adopted a communique on the education goal of the sustainable development goal which was addressed to the participants of the World Education Forum held in the Republic of Korea in May 2015.

60. The Secretariat supports Member States in their response to the above challenges as follows: **Building capacity for effective teacher policy development based on social dialogue:** Funded by the Global Partnership of Education, UNESCO, in partnership with Education International, launched October 2014 the project 'Improving Teacher Support and Participation in Local Education Groups (LEGs)'. Through capacity building and promotion of an effective social dialogue between national governments and teacher organizations, the project aims to engage teachers on the debate and elaboration of policies to enhance the effectiveness of teaching. The project has implemented 10 national capacity building workshops with teacher union participants in Benin, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Gambia, Haiti, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Mali, Nepal, Senegal, and Uganda. The project also aims to identify and develop in-service professional development mechanisms that strengthen teachers' participation in social dialogue for education policy reform leading to quality teaching. A comparative cross-regional technical report was commissioned to review the state of the art of such in-service support mechanisms. This has been followed by the administration of a survey instrument to collect

teachers' input on the kind of professional development needed for teachers' effective participation in social dialogue taking into account their local contexts and participation of various stakeholders.

61. Building capacity for teacher policy formulation and teacher education development:

With the Capacity Development for Education for All (CapEFA) Programme that started in 2003, the Secretariat continues to provide support to 8 countries in relation to evidence-based teacher policy formulation and teacher education development (Burkina Faso, Burundi, Guinea, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lesotho, Mali, Niger, and Uganda). Based on situational analyses of the teacher sub-sector, countries have advanced with various initiatives that have strengthened the quality of teacher education. In this regard, the Secretariat highlights accomplishments with the validation and dissemination of a diagnostic study on teachers (Mali); the development of teacher policies (Guinea, Lesotho, Mali, Niger, Uganda); teacher educators' training material on learning assessment (Guinea); harmonized teaching programmes (Burundi, Burkina Faso, Guinea, Niger), development of gender-sensitive teacher education curricula (Burundi; Lao PDR; Niger); and elaboration of teacher training programmes for bilingual branches at the primary level (Niger); frameworks for teacher competencies and assessment (Uganda); teacher management information systems (Burkina Faso, Burundi, Niger, LAO PDR, Uganda, Mali); introduction of initial and continued teacher training (Burundi).

62. Improving the quality of teacher education:

The Secretariat in collaboration with UNESCO's specialized Education Institutes assists governments with the development of teacher education curricular frameworks which aim to improve the quality of teacher education. A regional analysis of teacher education and professional development practices, trends, emerging issues was undertaken in the Arab region, Africa, Latin America and Caribbean. On the basis of these analyses, guidelines were developed for the design and implementation of teacher education frameworks in the above regions including participation from Uruguay, Colombia, Peru, Brazil, Dominican Republic, Haiti, Guatemala, Zambia, Uganda, Lesotho, Tanzania, Lebanon, Jordan, Syria, Qatar, and Egypt. The Secretariat also undertakes a project in Kenya and Lesotho focused on gender-sensitive training for teachers and school principals to enhance the teaching of mathematics, science, and technology to reinforce the participation and advancement of girls and women in scientific domains.

63. Increasing knowledge production and advocacy on the status of the teaching profession:

As a way to improve and promote the professionalization of early childhood education personnel, the Secretariat leads the project Survey of Teachers in Pre-Primary Education (STEPP). The project, launched in May 2015 and ending its first phase in December 2017, aims to develop and pilot instruments to survey pre-primary education personnel in various world regions. The Dominican Republic, Namibia, the Philippines, Viet Nam and Ghana have confirmed their participation in this project. Background work for developing data collection instruments includes a literature review on early childhood care and education personnel in low- and middle-income countries, and a review of international and national literature of relevance to STEPP. An International Advisory Group (IAG) has also been established to advise on the content and methodology of the project and the webpage on STEPP was launched in September 2015.

64. UNESCO continues to host the Secretariat of the International Task Force on Teachers for Education for All, a voluntary global alliance of Education For All (EFA) partners that advocates for and facilitates the coordination of international efforts to provide sufficient numbers of well qualified teachers to achieve the EFA goals and subsequently the teacher target in the new SDG agenda. The annual celebration of World Teachers' Day 'Empowering teachers, building

sustainable societies' took place October 5, 2015 as a joint effort of key partners: ILO, Education International, the International Task Force on Teachers for EFA, several UNESCO sections and units, OECD and UNESCO Clubs. Following the adoption of the new Sustainable Development Goals, this event raised awareness at a worldwide level on the status of teaching profession and its far-reaching impact on inclusive and equitable quality education. Emphasis was given to the importance of teachers in changing children's lives and building sustainable and prosperous societies with recommendations noting the importance of the professional role of teachers in early childhood education.

65. Improving quality teacher training in a digital era: Strengthening national capacities to develop and implement technology policies in education, particularly as part of teacher education/training and higher education is exemplified by the UNESCO-China Funds-in-Trust (CFIT) project on 'Enhancing Teacher Education for Bridging the Education Quality Gap in Africa'. This project aims to enhance the quality of teacher education in 8 African countries through the use of ICTs. This four-year initiative that started in 2012, builds the capacity of governments and teacher training institutions to increase the provision of qualified teachers. The project also develops teacher training institutions' capacity to equip teacher educators and teachers with ICT skills to improve the quality of teaching and learning. Cote d'Ivoire, Ethiopia and Namibia joined the project in 2012 and have produced 21 teacher training modules and implemented over 20 training seminars in themes including: Pedagogical use of ICT, establishing online platforms, and using ICT for action research etc. Congo, DR Congo, Liberia, Tanzania and Uganda joined the project in 2014 and have organized trainings in establishing online platforms. As part of knowledge-exchange among project countries, peer learning study tours have been organized in Cote d'Ivoire (May 2015) and Ethiopia (June 2015). A study tour to China (September 2015) was organized back to back with the International Seminar on Girls' and Women's Education. In this context, China's experience in ICT integration in teacher training and education (e.g. blended learning, Open Educational Resources (OER) development and usage, online platforms for training etc.) was shared with project representative from the CFIT countries.

66. The UNESCO ICT-Competency Framework for Teachers (ICT-CFT) aims to develop comprehensive national teacher ICT competency policies and standards. As part of technical assistance and policy advice provided to countries by the Secretariat, the framework takes into account three approaches to teaching: technology literacy - enabling students to use ICT in order to learn more efficiently; knowledge deepening - enabling students to acquire in-depth subject knowledge with application to real-world problems; knowledge creation- enabling students, citizens and the workforce, to create the new knowledge required for more harmonious, fulfilling and prosperous societies. Nepal, the Philippines and Uzbekistan have continued their development of national ICT competency standards for teachers based on the ICT-CFT. The Secretariat also supports the development of institutional ICT teacher training programmes based on ICT-CFT in Cote d'Ivoire, Congo, DR Congo, Ethiopia, Liberia, Namibia, Tanzania, and Uganda. Subsequently, technical support has also been provided to Zambia to organize two national workshops training ICT master trainers and master teachers with emphasis on advancing their ICT skills and training methodologies as part of the curriculum.

67. Countries are also being assisted with the design and implementation of higher education ICT/OER policies and strategies including ICT and distance-learning modes, backed by Open Educational Resources (OERs). Examples of accomplished activities highlight the assistance that UNESCO has provided to Bahrain, Indonesia, Kenya, and Oman to develop national strategies on adopting OER. These countries completed their OER policy document including

the adoption of open license for teacher training materials and encouraging teacher-generated resources. Cote d'Ivoire, Congo, DR Congo, Ethiopia, Liberia, Namibia, Tanzania, and Uganda have also being assisted in developing distance learning platforms for teachers. A deans' forum and training workshops on management of higher education institutions and establishment of online learning platforms were also co-organized with IICBA in Ethiopia. Deans from 8 countries were sponsored by the Secretariat to participate in these events.

68. The Secretariat has implemented policy forums involving governments and higher education institutions around the world to address how quality higher education will address the scale of student enrolment expected in the period 2015 to 2030; enrolment is expected to more than double from 200 million to some 430 million by 2030. Quality online teaching and learning represents a core strategy for meeting the expected growth in student demand. With the UNESCO Institute for Information Technologies in Education (UNESCO IITE) the project 'Access, Equity and Quality: Envisioning the Sustainable Future of Postsecondary Education in a Digital Age' is being implemented to advance reflection and co-operation in setting the future agenda regarding the contribution of ICT to postsecondary education.
