



# Legal texts on National Commissions for UNESCO

Sector for External Relations and Cooperation  
Division of Relations with National Commissions  
and New Partnerships (ERC/NCP)

**LEGAL TEXTS ON  
NATIONAL COMMISSIONS  
FOR UNESCO:**

**ARTICLE VII OF UNESCO'S CONSTITUTION,  
THE CHARTER OF NATIONAL COMMISSIONS  
FOR UNESCO  
AND  
THE RELEVANT RESOLUTIONS OF THE GENERAL  
CONFERENCE ADOPTED  
SINCE 1978**

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Cooperation  
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## FOREWORD

When the Constitution of UNESCO was adopted in November 1945, just after humanity had witnessed the most devastating war in its history, it was widely believed that the moral solidarity of mankind would be best achieved by closely associating the intellectual communities of its Member States with the cause of “building peace in the minds of men”. This forward-looking belief in the virtues of civil society was firmly asserted through Article VII of the Constitution which stipulated that “each Member State shall make such arrangements as suit its particular conditions for the purpose of associating its principal bodies interested in educational, scientific and cultural matters with the work of the Organization, preferably by the formation of a National Commission broadly representative of the government and such bodies”.

The network of National Commissions, which is a unique feature of UNESCO within the entire UN system, has grown over the past years. To date, 187 Member States and 3 Associate Members have established their own National Commissions. While mainly acting as national entities geared to pursue the tasks and priorities set by their governments, these bodies also provide UNESCO with an unparalleled network of intellectual and scientific communities in the promotion of its ethical message nationwide and worldwide. National Commissions are indeed the Organization’s essential link to civil society, thus constituting a comparative advantage and an indispensable tool for the achievement of its objectives.

The roles and responsibilities of National Commissions have significantly evolved over the years. Initially entrusted with the tasks of consultation and liaison by the Constitution of UNESCO in 1945, National Commissions were later called upon to take up the functions of information and execution by the General Conference at its 14th session in 1966. The Charter of National Commissions for UNESCO, adopted in 1978, called upon Member States to broaden their tasks by adding the functions of the preparation and evaluation of UNESCO’s programmes.

The adoption of the Charter of National Commissions for UNESCO by the General Conference at its 20th session in 1978 was an important milestone in the evolution of National Commissions. This text pays tribute to more than thirty years of cooperation between National Commissions and the Secretariat towards the fulfilment of UNESCO's mission and ideals.

The Charter specifies that it is for each Member States to define the range of responsibilities of its National Commission. It spells out the purpose and functions of National Commissions, explains their roles in relation to their governments and UNESCO, and outlines the responsibilities of both Member States and UNESCO towards National Commissions. Most importantly, the Charter stipulates that the strengthening of a National Commission's operational capacity should be a joint responsibility shared between the Member State concerned and the Secretariat.

Since the adoption of the Charter more than two decades ago, a further sixty-one National Commissions have been established, thus adding to the repository of intellectual wealth at the disposal of the Secretariat. Inevitably, the tasks of the National Commissions have also evolved considerably throughout these years. Today we witness a renewal of their essential role in facilitating UNESCO's outreach to civil society, non-governmental organizations, parliamentarians, the private sector and other important social actors in the community.

The present collection of legal texts includes Article VII of UNESCO's Constitution as the original source for the establishment of National Commissions, the Charter as the main text defining key principles and modalities of the multifaceted relationships between the Organization and National Commissions, and 20 Resolutions of the General Conference adopted since 1978.

For the first time, the Division of Relations with National Commissions and New Partnerships is publishing this full set of relevant texts as a central component of its new publication policy. We do hope that this collection will serve as a useful tool to better understand the evolution of the roles of National Commissions and thus, to draw full benefit from the knowledge, experience and commitment of each Member State to the goals and ideals of UNESCO.

The brochure is prepared as a follow-up to the recommendations of Quadrennial and Statutory Regional Conferences of National Commissions for UNESCO.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'S' shape with a horizontal line underneath it.

Ahmed Sayyad  
Assistant Director-General  
for External Relations and Cooperation

## **Article VII**

### **of the Constitution of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization**

#### **National co-operating bodies**

1. Each Member State shall make such arrangements as suit its particular conditions for the purpose of associating its principal bodies interested in educational, scientific and cultural matters with the work of the Organization, preferably by the formation of a National Commission broadly representative of the government and such bodies.

2. National Commissions or National Cooperating Bodies, where they exist, shall act in an advisory capacity to their respective delegations to the General Conference, to the representatives and alternates of their countries on the Executive Board and to their Governments in matters relating to the Organization and shall function as agencies of liaison in all matters of interest to it<sup>1</sup>.

3. The Organization may, on the request of a Member State, delegate, either temporarily or permanently, a member of its Secretariat to serve on the National Commission of that state, in order to assist in the development of its work.

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<sup>1</sup> Paragraph amended by the General Conference at its 26th session (1991) (26 C/Resolutions, p.136).

## **Charter of National Commissions for UNESCO**

*Adopted by the General Conference at its 20th session*

### **Preamble**

Whereas the purpose of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, as assigned to it by its Constitution, is to contribute to peace and security by promoting collaboration among the nations through education, science and culture in order to further universal respect for justice, for the rule of law and for the human rights and fundamental freedoms which are affirmed for the peoples of the world, without distinction of race, sex, language or religion, by the Charter of the United Nations,

Whereas it is essential, if the Organization is to achieve this purpose, that in each Member State it should have the active support of the intellectual and scientific communities and the co-operation of the population,

Considering the framework provided by Article VII of the Constitution, which stipulates to this end that 'each Member State shall make such arrangements as suit its particular conditions for the purpose of associating its principal bodies interested in educational, scientific and cultural matters with the work of the Organization, preferably by the formation of a National Commission broadly representative of the government and such bodies',

Whereas National Commissions, established under Article VII of the Constitution, are helping in an effective way to make UNESCO's objectives better known, broaden its range of influence and promote the execution of its programme, by involving the intellectual and scientific communities of their respective countries in this work,

Whereas the General Conference, on various occasions and particularly at its 19th session, has emphasized the need to associate Member States, through their National Commissions, more closely with the formulation, implementation and evaluation of the Organization's programmes, and has recommended that National Commissions be strengthened as advisory, liaison, information and executive bodies and that co-operation



between National Commissions be furthered at the subregional, regional and inter-regional levels,

The General Conference, meeting in Paris at its 20th session, this twenty-seventh day of November 1978 approves the present Charter of National Commissions for UNESCO.

## **Article I                    Purpose and functions**

1. The function of National Commissions is to involve in UNESCO's activities the various ministerial departments, agencies, institutions, organizations and individuals working for the advancement of education, science, culture and information, so that each Member State may:
  - (a) Contribute to the maintenance of peace and security and the common welfare of mankind by participating in the activities of UNESCO which aim to advance the mutual knowledge and understanding of peoples, give fresh impulse to popular education and to the spread of culture, and preserve, increase and diffuse knowledge;
  - (b) Play an ever-increasing role in UNESCO's work, and particularly in the formulation and execution of its programmes.
  
2. For this purpose, National Commissions:
  - (a) Co-operate with their governments and with services, organizations, institutions and individuals concerned with questions within UNESCO's competence;
  - (b) Encourage participation of national, governmental and non-governmental institutions and various individuals in the formulation and execution of UNESCO's programmes so as to secure for the Organization all the intellectual, scientific, artistic or administrative assistance that it may require;
  - (c) Disseminate information on the objectives, programme and activities of UNESCO and endeavour to arouse public interest in them.
  
3. In addition, and depending on the requirements and arrangements of each Member State, National Commissions may:
  - (a) Participate in the planning and execution of activities entrusted to UNESCO which are undertaken with the assistance of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations

Fund for Population Activities and other international programmes;

- (b) Participate in the search for candidates for UNESCO posts financed under the regular programme or from extra-budgetary sources, and in the placement of UNESCO fellowship holders;
- (c) Participate with other National Commissions in joint studies on matters of interest to UNESCO;
- (d) Undertake on their own initiative other activities related to the general objectives of UNESCO.

4. National Commissions collaborate with each other and with UNESCO's Regional Offices and centres in fostering regional, subregional and bilateral co-operation in education, the sciences, culture and information, particularly through the joint formulation and execution of programmes. This co-operation may bear upon the preparation, implementation and evaluation of projects and may take the form of joint surveys, seminars, meetings and conferences and exchanges of information, material and visits.

## **Article II      Role of National Commissions in their relations with Member States**

1. Each Member State defines the responsibilities of its own National Commission. In general, National Commissions:

- (a) Foster close liaison between state agencies and services, professional and other associations, universities and other centres of research and education, and other institutions concerned with education, the sciences, culture and information;
- (b) Co-operate with the delegations of their respective governments at the General Conference and at other intergovernmental meetings convened by UNESCO, inter alia by preparing the contributions of their governments to the work of these meetings;
- (c) Follow the development of UNESCO's programme and call the attention of the appropriate agencies to the potential benefits of international co-operation;
- (d) Contribute to national activities related to UNESCO's programme and to the evaluation thereof;
- (e) Provide a channel for disseminating information obtained from other countries on matters of domestic interest in education, the sciences, culture and information;
- (f) Encourage, at the national level, interdisciplinary dialogue and co-operation between institutions concerned with education,

the sciences, culture and information, with a view to helping to bring intellectual resources to bear on certain priorities for development.

2. Depending on the arrangements made by each Member State, National Commissions may also be expected, *inter alia*:
  - (a) To assume, alone or in collaboration with other bodies, responsibility for the operation of UNESCO projects in the country and for national participation in subregional, regional, or international UNESCO activities;
  - (b) To inform national agencies and institutions of the conclusions and recommendations adopted by the General Conference or by other meetings, or included in studies and reports; to encourage their discussion in the light of national needs and priorities; and to provide for such follow-up activities as may be required.

### **Article III      Services rendered to UNESCO by National Commissions**

1. In each Member State, the National Commission ensures the permanent presence of UNESCO in its country and contributes to the Organization's effort to promote international co-operation in the field of intellectual activities.
2. National Commissions are important sources of information for UNESCO on national requirements and priorities in regard to education, science, culture and information, thereby enabling the Organization to take Member States' requirements more fully into account when preparing its programmes. They also contribute to the Organization's standard-setting work and to the orientation or execution of its programme by making their views known when surveys or inquiries are carried out and by replying to questionnaires.
3. National Commissions disseminate information:
  - (a) To the mass media and the general public, on UNESCO's objectives, programmes and activities;
  - (b) To individuals and institutions concerned with any aspect of UNESCO's work.
4. National Commissions must be able to contribute effectively to the implementation of UNESCO's programme:

- (a) By mobilizing on its behalf the assistance and support of the country's specialized communities;
- (b) By assuming operational responsibility for some of UNESCO's programme activities.

#### **Article IV      Responsibilities of Member States towards National Commissions**

1. It is incumbent upon each Member State, under Article VII of the Constitution, to provide its National Commission with the status, structure and resources necessary to enable it effectively to discharge its responsibilities to UNESCO and to the Member State.
2. Each National Commission will normally include representatives of ministerial departments, services and other bodies interested in matters of education, science, culture and information, as well as representative individuals belonging to the specialized communities involved. Its members should be sufficiently senior and competent to secure for it the support and co-operation of ministries, services, national institutions and persons capable of contributing to UNESCO's work.
3. National Commissions may include executive and standing committees, coordinating bodies, sub-commissions and any other subsidiary body, as appropriate.
4. For their effective operation, National Commissions require:
  - (a) A legal status which is consistent with Article VII of the Constitution of UNESCO and the provisions of this Charter and which clearly defines the responsibilities vested in the National Commission, its membership, the conditions governing its operation and the resources on which it may draw;
  - (b) A permanent secretariat, provided with:
    - (i) a high-level staff, whose status, and in particular that of its Secretary-General, should be clearly defined, and who should be appointed for a sufficiently long period to ensure the necessary continuity of experience;
    - (ii) sufficient authority and financial means to enable it to carry out efficiently the functions specified in this Charter and to increase its participation in the activities of the Organization.
5. It is important for close collaboration to be established in each

Member State between its permanent delegation to UNESCO and its National Commission.

## **Article V            Responsibilities of UNESCO towards National Commissions**

1. It is incumbent upon the Director-General of UNESCO to take the measures that he deems most appropriate in order to involve National Commissions in the formulation, implementation and evaluation of the Organization's programme and activities and to ensure that close liaison is established between its various regional services, centres and offices and the National Commissions.
2. The Organization fosters the development of National Commissions and supplies them, to the utmost of its ability, with the facilities needed for the discharge of their functions:
  - (a) By giving advice and making available the services of consultants or members of the Secretariat in order to assist Member States, at their request, to establish or reorganize their National Commission;
  - (b) By providing training for new Secretaries-General and other officials of National Commissions;
  - (c) By providing them with material assistance;
  - (d) By informing them of all missions of visiting UNESCO officials and consultants and of any other UNESCO activity planned in their country;
  - (e) By providing them with documentation and information materials;
  - (f) By providing support for the National Commissions in the translation, adaptation and dissemination of the publications and documents of UNESCO in national languages, and assistance in the production of their own publications.
3. UNESCO can extend and develop its action through National Commissions by:
  - (a) Entering into contracts with them, wherever necessary, for the execution of activities included in its programme;
  - (b) Providing financial support for regular subregional and regional meetings held by National Commissions for the purpose of discussing common concerns, formulating proposals relating to the programmes and arranging for the joint execution of specific projects;

- (c) Providing advice and technical support for such meetings through the participation of UNESCO officials;
  - (d) Fostering the establishment of co-operative relationships enabling the decisions taken at subregional and regional meetings to be followed up;
  - (e) Providing financial and technical support for the liaison machinery established by National Commissions;
  - (f) Fostering the organization of meetings of Secretaries-General, particularly in connection with sessions of the General Conference.
4. UNESCO encourages contacts between the National Commissions of the different regions by continuing and increasing the support it gives to:
- (a) Meetings of groups of Secretaries-General from all regions to exchange ideas and experiences on specific problems;
  - (b) Interregional collective consultations of Secretaries-General of National Commissions;
  - (c) National Commissions of one region wishing to send an observer to the conferences of National Commissions of other regions;
  - (d) Joint projects and other co-operative activities undertaken by National Commissions of different regions.

## 20 Resolutions of the General Conference adopted since 1978

(THE DATE OF THE ADOPTION OF THE  
CHARTER OF NATIONAL COMMISSIONS  
FOR UNESCO)  
REGARDING THE ORGANIZATION'S COOPERATION  
WITH NATIONAL COMMISSIONS

### 1978 20 C/Resolution 7.4 Co-operation with National Commissions

*The General Conference,*

*Bearing in mind* the varied organization and functioning patterns of National Commissions and the right of each country to make such arrangements as suit its particular conditions,

*Considering* the importance of National Commissions as advisory, liaison, executive and information bodies at the national, regional and international level and, in particular, in the relations between Member States and between them and the Secretariat,

*Considering* further the part the National Commissions play with regard to innovation in the fields of the Organization's programme,

*1. Invites* Member States:

- (a) to give full effect to Article VII of the Constitution regarding the establishment of National Commissions and to ensure wide representation within those Commissions of government institutions, professional organizations, trade unions and non-governmental organizations active in the fields of education, science, culture and communication, and concerned with social and economic development and the promotion of human rights, and also of appropriate persons from universities and other institutions of higher learning or who have a special interest in activities within the Organization's sphere of competence;
- (b) to involve the National Commissions in the preparation of UNESCO's programme and in the execution and evaluation of

activities and projects carried out or supervised by the Organization;

- (c) to provide their National Commissions with adequate permanent staff and resources to enable them to perform the functions entrusted to them effectively;
- (d) to improve the links between their National Commissions and their permanent delegations to UNESCO;
- (e) to take due account of the recommendations of subregional, regional and interregional meetings and conferences of National Commissions;

2. *Authorizes* the Director-General to assist, at the request of Member States, in the establishment and functioning of the National Commissions with a view to enabling them to carry out their tasks more efficiently, in particular by making it possible for their staff and their members to learn more about the Organization's programmes and methods of action;

3. *Invites* the Director-General:

- (a) to encourage co-operation among National Commissions in the same region or in different regions, particularly in the context of the Participation Programme;
- (b) in line with the policy of decentralization, to make use of the National Commissions as far as possible in the preparation, execution, and evaluation of programme activities either directly, for example by means of contracts, or indirectly, for example by consulting them on the selection of appropriate organizations or experts from their countries to be invited to take part in the activities of the Organization;
- (c) to endeavour within the framework of the Approved Programme for 1979-1980 to implement the recommendations formulated at subregional, regional and interregional meetings and conferences of National Commissions;
- (d) to consider the most appropriate means whereby such recommendations can be made known formally to the governing bodies of the Organization.



**1980 21 C/Resolution 7.13 Co-operation with National Commissions**

*The General Conference,*

*Bearing in mind* the varied organization and functioning patterns of National Commissions,

*Considering* the importance of National Commissions as advisory, liaison, executive and information bodies at the national, regional and international level and, in particular, in relations among Member States and between them and the Secretariat,

*Considering* their role in the preparation and implementation of the Organization's various programmes,

*Considering* further the Charter of National Commissions for UNESCO, which emphasizes the responsibilities of Member States and of the Secretariat of UNESCO with regard to National Commissions,

*1. Invites* Member States:

- (a) to give full effect to Article VII of the Constitution regarding the establishment of National Commissions and to ensure wide representation within those Commissions of government institutions, professional organizations, trade unions and non-governmental organizations active in the fields of education, science, culture and communication, and concerned with social and economic development and the promotion of human rights, and also of appropriate persons from universities and other institutions of higher learning or who have a special interest in activities within the Organization's sphere of competence;
- (b) to involve the National Commissions in the preparation of UNESCO's programme and Medium-Term Plan and in the execution and evaluation of the Organization's activities;
- (c) to provide their National Commissions with adequate permanent staff and material resources to enable them to perform the functions entrusted to them effectively;
- (d) to maintain and, if necessary, strengthen the links between their National Commissions and their permanent delegations to UNESCO;

- (e) to establish procedures for permanent consultation between National Commissions of the same region, so as to strengthen co-ordination and co-operation between them. For this purpose, the National Commissions of the same region should decide on the operational details of these procedures, including the holding of meetings of the National Commissions at regular intervals or as often as may be deemed necessary;
- (f) to encourage and intensify activities designed to implement the recommendations of sub-regional, regional and interregional meetings and conferences of National Commissions;

2. *Authorizes* the Director-General to assist, at the request of Member States, in the establishment of National Commissions and in the development of existing National Commissions, in particular by making it possible for their members and their staff to acquire a better knowledge of the Organization's programmes and methods of action;

3. *Invites* the Director-General:

- (a) to encourage co-operation between National Commissions in the same region and in different regions, particularly in the context of the Participation Programme, inter alia, by making it possible to hold subregional meetings of National Commissions every two years;
- (b) to encourage co-operation among National Commissions in the same region and different regions, by making it possible for them to organize regional conferences of National Commissions every fourth year and to invite National Commissions of other regions to send observers to those conferences;
- (c) in line with the policy of decentralization, to make use of the National Commissions in the preparation, execution and evaluation of programme activities;
- (d) to take into consideration, within the framework of the Approved Programme for 1981-1983 and subsequent programmes, the recommendations formulated at subregional, regional and interregional meetings and conferences of National Commissions.

**1982 XC/Resolution XV.9 Co-operation with National Commissions**

*Considering* that Article VII of UNESCO's Constitution invites each Member State to make 'such arrangements as suit its particular conditions for the purpose of associating its principal bodies interested in educational, scientific and cultural matters with the work of the Organization, preferably by the formation of a National Commission broadly representative of the Government and such bodies',

*Recalling* the Charter of National Commissions for UNESCO adopted by the General Conference at its twentieth session, which stipulates in Article I: "The function of National Commissions is to involve in UNESCO's activities the various ministerial departments, agencies, institutions, organizations and individuals working for the advancement of education, science, culture and information, so that each Member State may:

- (a) contribute to the maintenance of peace and security and the common welfare of mankind by participating in the activities of UNESCO which aim to advance the mutual knowledge and understanding of peoples, give fresh impulse to popular education and to the spread of culture, and preserve, increase and diffuse knowledge;
- (b) play an ever-increasing role in UNESCO's work, and particularly in the formulation and execution of its programmes,"

*Recommends* that the Director-General:

- (a) strengthen assistance, provided at the request of Member States, in the establishment of National Commissions and in the development of existing National Commissions, in particular by means of information, consultation and training activities, to make it possible for their members and their staff to acquire a better knowledge of the Organization's programmes and methods of action and to participate fully in its work;
- (b) encourage the National Commissions to strengthen their activities both as centres for the exchange of ideas and the dissemination of information on the aims and activities of UNESCO and as agencies for promoting action in the fields of competence of the Organization;
- (c) encourage the National Commissions to undertake exchanges

- of views at the regional and interregional levels for the purpose of promoting multidisciplinary and intercultural reflection in all fields relating to the mandate of UNESCO;
- (d) continue to give the National Commissions all the aid necessary to enable them to participate fully in the preparation, execution and evaluation of the Organization's programmes.

<b>1983</b>	<b>22/Resolution</b>	<b>15.7</b>	<b>Co-operation with National Commissions</b>
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*The General Conference,*

*Recalling* section XV.9 of resolution 2/15 adopted at its fourth extraordinary session,

*Bearing* in mind the terms of the Charter of National Commissions for UNESCO,

*1. Invites* Member States:

- (a) to take all necessary steps to ensure the full implementation of the provisions of Article VII of the Constitution of UNESCO regarding the establishment, composition and role of National Commissions;
- (b) to provide their respective National Commissions, within the limits of their capabilities, with staff, financial resources and a national status sufficient to enable them to carry out their work effectively and play an increased part in the activities of the Organization;
- (c) to extend the activities of National Commissions to enable them to undertake effective action, nationally, regionally and interregionally, in those fields where UNESCO has a special responsibility and more particularly those to which its ethical role applies;

*2. Authorizes* the Director-General to assist Member States as far as possible, at their request, in the establishment or development of their respective National Commissions, particularly by means of information, consultation and training activities which would make it possible for their members and their staff to have a better knowledge of the programmes and working methods of UNESCO and to participate fully in its work;

3. *Invites* the Director-General:

- (a) to encourage the National Commissions to strengthen their activities both as centres for the exchange of ideas and the dissemination of information on the aims and activities of UNESCO and as agencies for promoting action in the fields of competence of the Organization;
- (b) to encourage the National Commissions to undertake exchanges of views at the regional and interregional levels for the purpose of promoting multidisciplinary and intercultural reflection in all fields relating to the mandate of UNESCO;
- (c) to continue to give the National Commissions all the aid necessary to enable them to participate fully in the formulation, execution and evaluation of the Organization's programmes.

**1985 23 C/Resolution 18.3 Co-operation with National Commissions**

*The General Conference,*

*Recalling* section XV.9 of Resolution 2/15, adopted at its fourth extraordinary session,

*Bearing in mind* the terms of the Charter of National Commissions for UNESCO,

*I. Invites* Member States:

- (a) to take all necessary steps to ensure the full implementation of the provisions of Article VII of the Constitution of UNESCO regarding the establishment, composition and role of National Commissions;
- (b) to provide their respective National Commissions, within the limits of their capabilities, with staff, financial resources and a national status sufficient to enable them to carry out their work effectively and play an increased part in the activities of the Organization;
- (c) to upgrade the functions of their National Commissions to enable them to undertake effective action, nationally, regionally and interregionally, in UNESCO's fields of competence, so as to help to achieve the aims defined in Article I of the Constitution;

2. *Authorizes* the Director-General to assist Member States as far as possible, at their request, in the establishment or development of their National Commissions, particularly by means of information, consultation and training activities that enable their members and staff to gain a better knowledge of the programmes and working methods of UNESCO and to participate fully in its work;

3. *Invites* the Director-General:

- (a) to continue to give the National Commissions all the aid necessary to enable them to participate fully in the formulation, execution and evaluation of the Organization's programmes;
- (b) to encourage the National Commissions, with the support of the appropriate units of the Secretariat, to pursue their information and promotion efforts in all the fields of UNESCO's competence;
- (c) to encourage the National Commissions to undertake exchanges of views at the regional and interregional levels for the purpose of promoting multidisciplinary and intercultural reflection in all fields relating to the mandate of UNESCO;

4. *Further invites* the Director-General, in accordance with Article V of the Charter of National Commissions relating to the responsibilities of UNESCO towards National Commissions, to explore ways and means of strengthening collaboration between the Secretariat and the National Commissions and, to that end, to maintain the staff and budget of the programme for co-operation with National Commissions at a sufficiently high level, taking particularly into account the needs of National Commissions in the developing countries.

**1987 24 C/Resolution 18.2 Co-operation with National Commissions**

*The General Conference,*

**I**

*Recalling* Article VII of UNESCO's Constitution and the Charter of National Commissions for UNESCO,

*Considering* that National Commissions, as consultative, liaison, executive

and informational bodies, have an important role to play in making UNESCO's objectives known, extending its influence and promoting the execution of its programme at the national, subregional, regional and interregional levels,

*Considering* that it is therefore important to develop co-operation between the Organization and National Commissions and to help the latter to co-operate more closely with each other at all levels and with non-governmental organizations, foundations and UNESCO Clubs, Centres and Associations,

*1. Invites* Member States:

- (a) to strengthen the activities of National Commissions by fully implementing the terms of Article VII of UNESCO's Constitution and the relevant provisions of the Charter of National Commissions for UNESCO;
- (b) to make more use of the skills and experience of non-governmental organizations, foundations and the UNESCO Clubs, Centres and Associations by associating them with the activities of National Commissions at the national, subregional, regional and interregional levels;

*2. Authorizes* the Director-General to assist Member States as far as possible, at their request, in the establishment or development of their National Commissions, particularly by means of information, consultation and training activities that enable their members and staff to gain a better knowledge of the programmes and working methods of UNESCO and to participate more fully in its work;

*3. Invites* the Director-General:

- (a) to continue to give National Commissions all possible assistance to enable them to participate actively in the formulation, execution and evaluation of the Organization's programmes;
- (b) to encourage the National Commissions to step up their activities in the field of information in order to give the widest possible publicity to UNESCO's objectives, programme and achievements;
- (c) to assist the National Commissions in developing their activities and co-operating among themselves with a view to promoting multi-disciplinary and intercultural reflection in UNESCO's fields of competence;

## II

*Considering* the important role played by National Commissions as consultative, executive and information bodies and in associating the principal bodies interested in education, science, culture and communication with the work of the Organization,

*Noting* the need to develop and strengthen National Commissions, particularly those in developing countries, to enable them to discharge their functions effectively and to play a more active role in the activities of the Organization,

*Recalling* 23 C/Resolution 18.3 by which it invited the Director-General, inter alia, to 'continue to give the National Commissions all the aid necessary to participate fully in the formulation, execution and evaluation of the Organization's programmes' and 'maintain the staff and budget of the programme for co-operation with National Commissions at a sufficiently high level, taking particularly into account the needs of National Commissions in the developing countries' ,

4. *Decides*, in order to ensure the implementation of the programme for co-operation with National Commissions foreseen in paragraphs 15457-15460 of document 24 C/5 and in particular the organization of three regional conferences of National Commissions and the training programme for officials of the Commissions, to increase the funds foreseen in the said paragraphs by \$200,000 through a transfer of a corresponding amount from the funds foreseen in paragraph 15461;

5. *Invites* the Director-General to ensure that the funds for the participation programme for support to National Commissions foreseen in paragraph 15461 of document 24 C/5 are totally used for the activities enumerated in the said paragraph and to make every possible effort to increase the funds under the participation programme for co-operation with National Commissions in the next draft programme and budget;

6. *Also invites* the Director-General to strengthen the National Commissions Unit in the Secretariat by providing it with a sufficient number of staff so as to enable the Unit to effectively carry out the tasks demanded of it.



**1989 25 C/Resolution 15.212 The role of National Commissions for UNESCO and their contribution to the work of UNESCO**

*The General Conference,*

*Recalling* Article VII of UNESCO's Constitution and the Charter of National Commissions adopted by the General Conference at its twentieth session (20 C/Resolution 7/42),

*Considering* the terms of 24 C/Resolution 18.2 relating to co-operation with National Commissions,

*Taking note* of the lines of emphasis of the Medium-Term Plan for 1990–1995,

*Appreciating* the results of the regional conferences and other meetings that have taken place during the biennium, which form a good basis for further constructive co-operation between National Commissions,

*Recognizing* that the National Commissions are the natural relay through which human and material resources can be mobilized at the national level to promote UNESCO's work in all its fields of competence,

*Holding* the view that UNESCO will have to respond to new challenges and for that purpose call increasingly upon National Commissions, which will have greater responsibilities,

*Thanking* the Director-General for the report submitted to it at the present session on measures taken to strengthen co-operation with National Commissions (25 C/39),

*1. Invites* Member States to create or improve the requisite conditions and provide National Commissions with the necessary means to enable them to assume their functions fully, in particular:

- (a) by promoting co-operation between the National Commissions, with the possible incorporation of such co-operation within programmes agreed bilaterally;
- (b) by seeing to it that there is a certain degree of continuity at the secretariats of National Commissions;

- (c) by including, where possible, members of National Commissions in delegations to the General Conference and any other meetings organized by UNESCO;
- (d) by continuing to encourage participation by the intellectual community in the activities of the National Commissions;
- (e) by providing National Commissions with broader opportunities for reporting their activities to the media and by associating the media to a greater extent with those activities;
- (f) by strengthening the relations between National Commissions and the offices of the United Nations Resident Co-ordinators;

2. *Invites* the Director-General:

- (a) to continue to associate the National Commissions closely with the formulation and evaluation of the Organization's programmes;
- (b) to strengthen participation by National Commissions in the implementation of the Organization's programmes, in particular by drawing up, for each major programme area and each transverse theme and programme for 1990-1991, a list of activities in which co-operation by National Commissions will be deemed a priority;
- (c) to help the National Commissions to play their role in the exchange of information:
  - (i) by supplying them in a timely fashion with information material on the Organization's activities so as to provide effective support for their public relations work;
  - (ii) by promoting the exchange of experience and information between National Commissions, and by setting aside space for this purpose in UNESCO publications;
- (d) to intensify regional and interregional co-operation in the Organization's future programmes and budgets, in particular through the participation of observers from other regions in regional conferences and meetings of National Commissions;
- (e) to associate National Commissions more closely with the decentralization process, in particular by improving their relations with field units;
- (f) to give special attention to Member States without National Commissions, to the most disadvantaged National Commissions and to those established recently, reminding them of the opportunity afforded them under Article VII.3 of the Constitution;
- (g) to report to the Executive Board every two years on collaboration between UNESCO and the National Commissions;

3. *Invites* Member States and the Director-General:

- (a) to attach greater importance to the effective application of the Charter of National Commissions for UNESCO;
- (b) to foster exchanges of personnel between National Commissions, especially through fellowships or visitor programmes;
- (c) to establish interregional pilot projects among National Commissions with a view to strengthening North-South and South-South co-operation.

**1991 26 C/Resolution 13.2 Bureau for External Relations**

*The General Conference,*

*Underscoring* the need to strengthen consultation and co-ordination between the Secretariat on the one hand, and the Member States and institutions working with UNESCO on the other, with a view to the implementation of the programme,

*Recognizing* the important role played by National Commissions, UNESCO Clubs, Centres and Associations and international non-governmental organizations in making UNESCO's objectives widely known, extending its influence and promoting participation in the implementation of its programmes,

*Recalling* its previous decisions on the subject and in particular 25 C/Resolution 15.213 which it adopted after examining the sexennial report of the Executive Board on the contribution made to UNESCO's activities by international non-governmental organizations (NGOs),

*Aware* of the need to strengthen co-operation with the whole United Nations system and with intergovernmental organizations with a view to increasing the harmonization and complementarity of their respective activities in UNESCO's fields of competence,

*Taking into consideration* the Charter of National Commissions as well as 136 EX/Decision 3.3 adopted by the Executive Board following the in-depth study on decentralization carried out by the Special Committee,

1. *Invites* the Director-General to ensure that the Secretariat participates actively in inter-secretariat and inter-agency meetings, to engage in reciprocal consultations on UNESCO's programmes and those of other intergovernmental organizations, whether part of the United Nations system or not, to exchange information on programmes of common interest, and to prepare and implement joint activities of an interdisciplinary character to meet the priority needs of Member States;

2. With a view to promoting co-operation with National Commissions and UNESCO Clubs, Centres and Associations:

(a) *Invites* Member States:

- (i) to strengthen the activities of National Commissions by fully implementing the terms of Article VII of UNESCO's Constitution and the relevant provisions of the Charter of National Commissions for UNESCO;
- (ii) to promote the establishment, extension, strengthening and co-ordination of the UNESCO Clubs, Centres and Associations, and to support their World Federation;

(b) *Invites* the Director-General:

- (i) to assist Member States in the establishment or development of their National Commissions, particularly by means of advisory and information services as well as training activities, in line with Article VII.3 of the Constitution;
- (ii) to provide direct assistance to National Commissions in order to enable them to strengthen their operations;
- (iii) to associate the National Commissions closely with the formulation, implementation and evaluation of the Organization's programmes;
- (iv) to involve National Commissions in the execution of operational projects in close co-operation with field offices;
- (v) to support the activities of National Commissions at the regional and interregional level;
- (vi) to provide UNESCO Clubs, Centres and Associations and their World Federation with the assistance required to enable them to continue to spread UNESCO's ideals and to encourage broad participation in the accomplishment of the Organization's tasks;
- (vii) to propose a substantial increase in the budget for activities designed to strengthen UNESCO's relations with National Commissions when preparing the Draft Programme and Budget for 1994-1995, and for subsequent biennia.

**I**

3. With a view to adapting the structure of National Commissions to UNESCO's programmes, advises Member States to strengthen their National Commissions by broadening their structures to the extent that is necessary so that they may reflect UNESCO's areas of competence, including support for and planning of development programmes;

4. In order to create a partnership arrangement such as will genuine decentralization, *invites* the Director-General:

- (a) to take fully into consideration the fact that the National Commissions should be recognized as being among the chief participants in the decentralization process, and should be strengthened for this purpose;
- (b) to decentralize a number of programme activities by calling on the National Commissions, which are expected to serve as intermediaries between Headquarters and universities, NGOs, UNESCO Clubs, intellectual communities and other bodies likely to ensure the implementation of these activities;
- (c) to take appropriate measures to ensure that UNESCO's field offices improve their co-ordination and information links with the National Commissions; to ensure that Headquarters provides the Commissions with all relevant information concerning missions, projects and other activities carried out in their respective countries; and that the National Commissions meet as frequently as possible under the auspices of UNESCO, co-ordination of these meetings being provided by UNESCO's field offices in the region or subregion concerned.

[**Note:** Full text of this resolution can be obtained from Document 26 C/Resolutions (Vol.I).]

**1993 27 C/Resolution 13.12 Co-operation with National Commissions**

*The General Conference,*

*Welcoming* the innovative approach to the role of UNESCO in international intellectual co-operation, as elaborated on by the Director-General in his Introduction to the Draft Programme and Budget for 1994-1995 (paras. 8-24 and 37-49),

*Referring* to Article VII of UNESCO's Constitution, on 'National co-operating bodies', and to the Charter of National Commissions for UNESCO, adopted at its twentieth session,

*Recalling* its previous decisions on the subject, in particular 25 C/Resolution 15.212, on "The role of National Commissions for UNESCO and their contribution to the work of UNESCO", and 26 C/Resolution 13.2, on the "Bureau for External Relations",

1. *Invites* Member States to enable their National Commissions, 'being among the chief participants in the decentralization process' of UNESCO (as stipulated in 26 C/Resolution 13.2, para. 4(a)), to 'act as the focal point for the expression and rallying of the dynamic forces of the intellectual community at the national level' (27 C/5, Introduction, para. 39) and to develop further their partnership with the Secretariat of UNESCO so as 'to ensure the permanent presence of UNESCO in [the] country' (as stipulated in the Charter of National Commissions for UNESCO, Article 3, para. 1), in particular by:

- (a) providing the National Commissions, particularly those recently created or restructured, with appropriate high-level staff, sufficient authority and the financial means necessary to implement their statutory tasks under present circumstances;
- (b) creating the necessary conditions 'for close collaboration to be established in each Member State between its permanent delegation to UNESCO and its National Commission' (Charter of National Commissions for UNESCO, Article 4, para. 5);
- (c) fully utilizing their National Commissions in their liaison agency capacity in the ongoing process of decentralizing UNESCO's activities;
- (d) studying ways and means to make their National Commissions focal points of information on national involvement in UNESCO's policies and programmes;

2. *Invites* the National Commissions to adapt their activities and programmes to the new role as UNESCO's 'most important partners' assigned to them by the relevant decisions of the General Conference and the Executive Board and by the Director-General, underlining their function of 'natural mediators with the intellectual communities' and 'with the representatives of civil society' (141 EX/INF.8, paras. 28 and 88), in particular by:

- (a) broadening their scope for linking UNESCO with its 'national constituencies', including the educational, scientific and cultur-

al communities and non-governmental organizations, businesses, trade unions and the media;

- (b) establishing contacts, wherever appropriate, with national partners of other United Nations institutions and agencies, of other intergovernmental organizations active in UNESCO's fields of competence, and of international non-governmental organizations in consultative status with UNESCO;
- (c) further developing co-operation between National Commissions, with a view to improving subregional and inter-regional co-operation in UNESCO's fields of competence, and assisting newly established or restructured National Commissions in their development;

3. *Invites* the Director-General to develop further the new approach to 'decentralized implementation of activities', involving both the intellectual communities at international, regional, subregional and national levels and UNESCO's institutional partners operating in the Member States;

4. *Invites* the Director-General, in particular, with a view to improving effectiveness through policy co-ordination and operational collaboration in the whole field of international and inter-agency co-operation in education, science, culture and communication:

- (a) to ensure that co-ordination arrangements under existing agreements between UNESCO and other United Nations agencies and other intergovernmental organizations provide for such co-ordination also at regional and subregional levels and that any new agreements concluded between UNESCO and other intergovernmental organizations also provide for adequate co-ordination so as to avoid duplication of work and achieve synergistic effects;
- (b) to ensure further that close liaison is established between UNESCO's various decentralized and field services, centres and offices and the National Commissions (as stipulated in the Charter of National Commissions for UNESCO, Article 5, para. 1), including the whole area of inter-agency co-operation;
- (c) to study ways and means of helping the National Commissions to assume their task of involving intellectual communities in international co-operation in education, science, culture and communication, inter alia through acting as national focal points of information;
- (d) to extend his support in particular to newly established or restructured National Commissions, and to assist them in their

- activities with training and progress evaluation, in order to make them fully operational;
- (e) to conduct an analysis of the Participation Programme in respect of its operational procedures for relations between Headquarters and the National Commissions, and an evaluation of the relations between UNESCO field offices and the National Commissions;
  - (f) to study the possibility of improving the flow of information between Headquarters and National Commissions, including circular and other letters, Executive Board and General Conference documents, copies of correspondence with national experts and with UNESCO's decentralized and field offices, and travel by UNESCO staff, with a view to strengthening the advisory capacity of National Commissions in their countries, in particular newly established or restructured National Commissions;
  - (g) to consult the National Commission of a Member State on any activity the Secretariat is planning to implement that involves that Member State or its nationals.

**1995 28 C/Resolution 13.1 Consultation with National Commissions**

*The General Conference,*

*Recognizing* the importance of regional and subregional consultations preparatory to the General Conference sessions,

Affirming the desirability of maintaining such consultations as part of the regular cycle of UNESCO's determination of its Medium-Term Strategy and Draft Programme and Budget,

*Acknowledging* the exceptionally fruitful outcome of these consultations in aiding the work of the General Conference and the Executive Board,

*Requests* the Director-General to transfer the funding of such consultations from the total allocation for the Participation Programme into the regular programme and budget to be allocated to the Bureau for External Relations, commencing with document 29 C/5.



**1995 28 C/Resolution 13.5 New partnerships**

*The General Conference,*

*Considering* that the National Commissions play a leading role in adjusting programme implementation to the specific characteristics of the different regions and in ensuring the Organization's active presence in its Member States,

*Recognizing* the need further to improve the methods used of identifying new partners for UNESCO in its Member States,

*Recalling* 26 C/Resolution 13.23,

*Taking into account* the relevant recommendations of the Executive Board (28 C/6, paras. 107-110 and 28 C/9, paras. 56-60),

1. *Invites* the Director-General to ensure that it is through co-operation with the National Commissions that new partnerships will be forged both with competent representative bodies of civil society and with private bodies;

2. *Decides* to add to the 'Directives concerning UNESCO's relations with foundations and similar institutions' (26 C/Resolution 13.23) the following: 'Article VII: The procedures for establishing official relationships with foundations or institutions, in particular Article II, paragraph 2, as well as other relevant regulations of these Directives shall also be applied when establishing new partnerships with all bodies representing civil society as well as with all bodies representing the private sector';

3. *Requests* the Director-General to submit to the Executive Board specific Directives concerning co-operation with private extra-budgetary funding sources and the rights of new partners to use UNESCO's name, emblem, or any other type of representation of UNESCO's corporate identity.

**1997 29 C/Resolution 60 Development of closer links between UNESCO Clubs, Centres and Associations and the National Commissions**

*The General Conference,*

*Considering* the important role played by UNESCO Clubs, Centres and Associations in increasing the dissemination of UNESCO's ideals in civil society, as well as of its objectives and priority themes,

*Bearing in mind* the need:

- (a) to strengthen existing relations between the National Commissions and the UNESCO Clubs, Centres and Associations as being instrumental in promoting the ideals of UNESCO in their respective countries,
- (b) to foster the process of integration with a view to achieving greater co-operation and understanding,

*Invites* Member States:

- (a) to develop closer links and greater exchanges of information between, on the one hand, the Federations of UNESCO Clubs, Centres and Associations and the National Commissions and, on the other hand, the UNESCO Secretariat, in particular the Division of Relations with National Commissions and UNESCO Clubs, Centres and Associations;
- (b) to encourage the creation of an ex officio seat for the National Federation of UNESCO Clubs on the executive committee or its equivalent of each National Commission, with a view to reciprocal support in the activities undertaken.

**1997 29 C/Resolution 61 Interregional co-operation among National Commissions**

*The General Conference,*

*Reaffirming* the vital role assumed by the National Commissions as the constitutionally recognized focal points of UNESCO's activities in Member States,

*Appreciating* the continued efforts of the Director-General to involve the National Commissions more and more in the Organization's programme planning, implementation and evaluation by organizing, inter alia, consultation meetings of National Commissions on subregional, regional and interregional levels concerning the preparation of the C/4 and C/5 documents,

*Recognizing* that well-planned programming by National Commissions themselves is a requisite for activating participation in the programme execution of the Organization,

*Stressing* the need for such consultation meetings to take place in a more frequent but systematic way and, above all, for those recommendations adopted at the different consultation meetings to be adequately reflected in the decision-making process of the Organization focusing on the preparation of the forthcoming C/4 and C/5 documents,

*Emphasizing* the necessity of a proper mechanism in order to maximize the role of National Commissions in programme planning as well as programme execution,

*Welcoming* the Director-General's efforts to elicit the effective participation of National Commissions in the programme execution of the Organization and in the preparation of document 30 C/5,

1. *Invites* the Director-General to look into the possibility of holding an interregional conference of National Commissions for UNESCO during sessions of the General Conference with a view to reviewing the effective joint functioning of National Commissions at subregional and regional levels, particularly relating to the preparation of the C/4 and C/5 documents;

2. *Further invites* the Director-General, in collaboration with field offices, to encourage and support the networking of National Commissions on a subregional basis, it being understood that such networking will constitute a firm foundation for undertaking various joint projects among Member States in UNESCO's fields of competence.

**1997 29 C/Resolution 62 Co-operation with the National Commissions on the execution of the programme**

*The General Conference,*

*Considering* that, as stated in the Medium-Term Strategy for 1996-2001 (28 C/4 Approved), the National Commissions are the key partners of UNESCO, unique in the United Nations system, and that their role is to co-operate closely with the Organization in preparing, executing, following up and evaluating its activities and programmes in the Member States,

*Taking into account* the urgent need to make the National Commissions more dynamic and to revitalize and strengthen them institutionally so that they can carry out the mission assigned to them under the Constitution of UNESCO and the Charter of the National Commissions,

*Bearing in mind* the structural financial limitations that the National Commissions experience, faced with the increasing responsibilities and demands imposed on them by the General Conference,

*Taking into account* the need for closer interaction among the National Commissions of all regions, as well as between the National Commissions and the UNESCO Secretariat, including field units,

*Recognizing* the clear need to devise mechanisms for the development of joint strategies to be implemented by the National Commissions and to set up a systematic consultation mechanism between National Commissions and field units concerning topics or actions of a regional nature,

*Supporting* the creation of a Standing Committee of National Commissions, composed of their Secretaries-General and of members of the Secretariat, to be entrusted with the drawing up and monitoring of strategies to strengthen the role of the National Commissions (29 C/5, para. 13004),

*Invites* the Director-General:

- (a) to consider new joint working procedures between the Secretariat, the field offices and the National Commissions in order to put into effect the intention to strengthen the management capacity of the National Commissions expressed in document 29 C/5;

- (b) to take the necessary steps to establish, in the light of proposals on its mandate and composition to be made at the National Commissions informal regional meetings during this session of the General Conference and the regional consultation meetings on the preparation of document 30 C/5, the new Standing Committee that will propose as a matter of priority during the biennium an experimental plan for financial and technical support to the National Commissions to promote the development of UNESCO's programme activities.

**1997    29 C/Resolution 87 Structure and function of the General Conference**

*The General Conference,*

*Recalling* 28 C/Resolution 37.2 by which it requested the President of the 28th session of the General Conference, in consultation with the Director-General and with the Chairperson of the Executive Board, to 'establish an ad hoc working group whose mandate would be to examine the structure and function of the General Conference and recommend the most effective means to restore to the Conference its original function as a full-fledged policy-making body', and reaffirming 28 C/Resolution 13.1,

*Having considered* document 29 C/27 and Add. 1, 2 and 3 containing the report of the working group and the Executive Board's comments,

*Taking note* of the reports of Commission I (29 C/80 and Add. and Corr.) and the Legal Committee (29 C/71),

*Endorses* the recommendations of the working group, as amended:

1. The working group recommends that wide-ranging consultations on the preparation of the work of the General Conference be held prior to sessions. In particular, regional and/or subregional meetings of National Commissions should be organized in the first year of each biennium, as was done for the preparation of the Medium-Term Strategy for 1996-2001. These meetings should be held within a reasonable time limit and focus on the overall preparation of the Draft Programme and Budget.

2. The group, stressing the importance of maintaining the written consultation of Member States on the preparation of the Draft Programme and Budget, recommends that sufficient time be allowed for Member States to send their replies...

[**Note:** Full text of this resolution can be obtained from Document 29 C/Resolutions (Vol. I).]

**1999 30 C/Resolution 59 Support for Programme Execution**

*LThe General Conference*

*Invites* the Director-General:

- (a) to implement the plan of action for this Part in order to:
  - (i) strengthen relations with Member States, in particular through their Permanent Delegations and National Commissions, with a view to responding more adequately to their priority needs, paying particular attention to:
    - enhancing the capacity of National Commissions as focal points for UNESCO in the Member States by strengthening their operational and management capabilities, by promoting closer cooperation among them at international, regional and subregional levels, by further developing their complementary role vis-à-vis the Secretariat and in particular the field offices, and by strengthening through them partnerships with representatives of civil society (parliamentarians, town councils, etc.); and to increasing the participation of National Commissions in the execution of activities envisaged in document 30 C/5 Approved, through the establishment of a special procedure to that effect;
    - giving a fresh impetus to the UNESCO Clubs, Centres and Associations movement as an active protagonist of UNESCO's message, through concrete projects at local and national levels...

[**Note:** Full text of this resolution can be obtained from Document 29 C/Resolutions (Vol.I).]

**1999 30 C/Resolution 62 Draft Statutes of the Standing Committee of the National Commissions for UNESCO**

*The General Conference,*

*Having examined* documents 30 C/57, 30 C/76 and Add. and Corr.,

*Decides* that the Standing Committee of the National Commissions for UNESCO, in consultation with the Secretariat and members of the Legal Committee of the 30th session of the General Conference, shall review its draft Statutes, which will be examined by the Executive Board before being submitted to the General Conference at its 31st session, and that the Standing Committee shall continue its work pending the adoption of its Statutes.

**1999 30 C/Resolution 83 Draft guidelines for the rational implementation of decentralization**

*The General Conference,*

## II

*Referring* to the Charter of National Commissions which, in Article I, states that the function of National Commissions is to involve in UNESCO's activities the various national partners working for the advancement of education, science and culture so that each Member State may play an ever-increasing role in UNESCO's work, and particularly in the formulation and execution of its programmes,

*Recalling* that, under paragraph 3(a) of Article I, National Commissions may participate in the planning and execution of activities entrusted to UNESCO which are undertaken with the assistance of UNDP, UNEP, UNFPA and other international programmes,

*Recalling also* that paragraph 2(a) of Article II of that Charter assigns to National Commissions the role of assuming, alone or in collaboration with other bodies, responsibility for the operation of UNESCO projects in the country and for national participation in subregional, regional or international UNESCO activities,

*Bearing in mind* that paragraph 1 of Article V of the Charter authorizes the Director-General to take the measures that he deems most appropriate in order to involve National Commissions in the formulation, implementation and evaluation of the Organization's programmes and activities and to ensure that close liaison is established between its various regional services, centres and offices and the National Commissions,

*Convinced* that the rational and efficient implementation of decentralization requires the effective involvement of National Commissions in formulating, implementing and evaluating UNESCO's programmes,

*With a view to* genuinely strengthening the management capacity of the National Commissions,

1. *Invites* the Director-General to prepare a paper for consideration by the Executive Board at its 159th session on the implementation of the proposals contained in document 30 C/6, paragraph 35, to increase the participation of National Commissions in the execution of activities of the regular Programme and Budget (30 C/5 Approved);

2. *Further invites* the Director-General:

- (a) to ensure that the work plans of the field offices are drawn up in close consultation with the National Commissions concerned and to report to the Executive Board at its 159th session on these consultations;
- (b) to ensure the application of 27 C/Resolution 13.12 on cooperation with National Commissions, particularly the last paragraph concerning the absolute need to consult the National Commissions concerned before concluding any contract with national partners.

[**Note:** Full text of this resolution can be obtained from Document 30 C/Resolutions (Vol.I).]

**2001      31 C/Resolution 46 External Relations and Cooperation**

*The General Conference*

*Authorizes* the Director-General:

- (a) to implement the corresponding plan of action in order to:



- (i) strengthen relations with Member States, through their Permanent Delegations and National Commissions, with a view to responding to their priority needs, paying particular attention to:
- enhancing the capacity of National Commissions as main relays for UNESCO's work at the national level by strengthening their operational capacities, by promoting bilateral, subregional, regional and interregional cooperation, by reinforcing the tripartite collaboration between National Commissions, national partners and the Secretariat, in particular, the field offices; and by strengthening through them partnerships with representatives of civil society (parliamentarians, local NGOs, etc.); and enhancing the participation of National Commissions in the elaboration, execution and evaluation of the Organization's programmes;
  - mobilizing the UNESCO Clubs, Centres and Associations movement, in cooperation with the World Federation of UNESCO Clubs, Centres and Associations (WFUCA), as an active protagonist of UNESCO's message, programmes and ideals;
  - supporting the development of new cooperative partnerships and alliances, including with the private sector;
- (ii) reinforce the impact, effectiveness and visibility of UNESCO's action in Member States, in particular by ensuring the Organization's active participation in the development of the United Nations system-wide policies and initiatives through the intergovernmental and inter-agency machinery, by strengthening coordination, partnerships and joint activities with intergovernmental organizations; and by ensuring dynamic cooperative relations with non-governmental organizations and foundations in accordance with the existing statutory framework;
- (iii) increase extrabudgetary contributions in support of UNESCO's strategic objectives and programme priorities, in particular by strengthening cooperation with organizations of the United Nations system, multilateral and bilateral donors and development banks, civil society and the private sector and by enhancing the capacity of the Secretariat, both at Headquarters and in the field, and of the National Commissions for generating extrabudgetary resources;

- (iv) mobilize Member States through National Commissions and UNESCO Clubs, Centres and Associations, and also the private sector and civil society, including non-governmental organizations, for the preparation and follow-up to the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg, September 2002), and ensure effective UNESCO participation in United Nations system-wide efforts;
- (b) allocate for this purpose an amount of \$4,396,500 for programme costs and \$17,612,300 for staff costs.

**2001    31 C/Resolution 47 Standing Committee of the National Commissions**

*The General Conference,*

*Having examined* document 31 C/18,

*Considering* 161 EX/Decision 5.2 by which the Executive Board recommends that it reconsider at its 31st session the creation of the proposed Standing Committee of the National Commissions for UNESCO,

*Decides* not to create the Standing Committee.

## THESAURUS

### **PURPOSE AND FUNCTIONS OF NATIONAL COMMISSIONS**

***Purpose of National Commissions:*** Article VII of UNESCO's Constitution and Article I of the Charter of National Commissions

***National Commissions as advisory bodies:*** Article VII of UNESCO's Constitution; Articles I and II of the Charter; 20 C/Res. 7.4; 21 C/Res. 7.13; 24 C/Res. 18.2; 27 C/Res. 13.12

***National Commissions as liaison bodies:*** Article VII of UNESCO's Constitution; Article II of the Charter; 20 C/Res. 7.4; 21 C/Res. 7.13; 24 C/Res. 18.2; 29 C/Res. 61; 30 C/Res. 59; 31 C/Res. 46

***National Commissions as information bodies:*** Articles I, II, and III of the Charter; 20 C/Res. 7.4; 21 C/Res. 7.13; 22 C/Res. 15.7; 23 C/Res. 18.3; 24 C/Res. 18.2; 25 C/Res. 15.212; 27 C/Res. 13.12

***Participation of National Commissions in programme elaboration:*** Articles I and V of the Charter; 20 C/Res. 7.4; 21 C/Res. 7.13; 4 XC/Res. XV.9; 22 C/Res. 15.7; 23 C/Res. 18.3; 24 C/Res. 18.2; 25 C/Res. 15.212; 26 C/Res. 13.2; 29 C/Res. 61; 29 C/Res. 62; 30 C/Res. 83; 31 C/Res. 46

***Participation of National Commissions in programme execution:*** Articles I, II, III, and V of the Charter; 20 C/Res. 7.4; 21 C/Res. 7.13; 4XC/Res. XV.9; 22 C/Res. 15.7; 23 C/Res. 18.3; 24 C/Res. 18.2; 25 C/Res. 15.212; 26 C/Res. 13.2; 27 C/Res. 13.12; 29 C/Res. 61; 29 C/Res. 62; 30 C/Res. 83; 31 C/Res. 46

***Participation of National Commissions in programme evaluation:*** Articles II and V of the Charter; 4 XC/Res. XV.9; 22 C/Res. 15.7; 23 C/Res. 18.3; 24 C/Res. 18.2; 25 C/Res. 15.212; 26 C/Res. 13.2; 29 C/Res. 61; 29 C/Res. 62; 30 C/Res. 83; 31 C/Res. 46

## **RESPONSIBILITIES OF MEMBER STATES TOWARDS NATIONAL COMMISSIONS**

***Inter-ministerial character of National Commissions:***  
Articles II and IV of the Charter; 20 C/Res. 7.4; 21 C/Res. 7.13; 4 XC/Res. XV.9; 26 C/Res. 13.2

***Status, staffing and resources of National Commissions:***  
Article IV of the Charter; 20 C/Res. 7.4; 21 C/Res. 7.13; 22 C/Res. 15.7; 23 C/Res.18.3; 24 C/Res. 18.2; 25 C/Res. 15.212; 26 C/Res. 13.2; 27 C/Res. 13.12

***Continuity of leadership at the secretariats of National Commissions:*** Article IV of the Charter; 25 C/Res. 15.212

***Relations between National Commissions and Permanent Delegations:*** Article II of the Charter; 20 C/Res. 7.4; 21 C/Res. 7.13; 27 C/Res. 13.12

***Inclusion of members of National Commissions in delegations to the General Conference:*** 25 C/Res. 15.212

## **RESPONSIBILITIES OF UNESCO TOWARDS NATIONAL COMMISSIONS**

***Training of National Commissions' officials and staff:***

Article V of the Charter; 20 C/Res. 7.4; 21 C/Res. 7.13; 4XC/Res. XV.9; 22 C/Res. 15.7; 23 C/Res.18.3; 24 C/Res. 18.2; 26 C/Res. 13.2; 27 C/Res. 13.12; 30 C/Res. 59

***Supporting sub-regional and regional meetings and activities of National Commissions:*** Article V of the Charter; 21 C/Res. 7.13; 4XC/Res. XV.9; 22 C/Res. 15.7; 23 C/Res.18.3; 25 C/Res. 15.212; 26 C/Res. 13.2; 29 C/Res. 61; 30 C/Res. 59; 31 C/Res. 46

***Assistance in strengthening the operational capacities of National Commissions:*** Article V of the Charter; 4XC/Res. XV.9; 22 C/Res. 15.7; 23 C/Res.18.3; 24 C/Res. 18.2; 25 C/Res. 15.212; 26 C/Res. 13.2; 27 C/Res. 13.12; 30 C/Res. 59; 31 C/Res. 46

***Decentralization and relations between National Commissions and Field Offices:*** Articles I and V of the Charter; 20 C/Res. 7.4; 21 C/Res. 7.13; 25 C/Res. 15.212; 26 C/Res. 13.2; 27 C/Res. 13.12; 29 C/Res. 61; 30 C/Res. 59; 30 C/Res. 83

***Consultations with National Commissions on the preparation of C/4 and C/5:*** 20 C/Res. 7.4; 21 C/Res. 7.13; 28 C/Res. 13.1; 29 C/Res. 61; 29 C/Res. 87

**Informing/consulting National Commissions on every relevant mission, project, contract and activity:** 26 C/Res. 13.2; 27 C/Res. 13.12; 30 C/Res. 83

**Preparation of work plans of Field Offices in consultation with National Commissions:** 30 C/Res. 83

**Flow of information between UNESCO Secretariat and National Commissions:** 25 C/Res. 15.212; 27 C/Res. 13.12

## COOPERATION AND COORDINATION

**Cooperation and networking among National Commissions:** Article V of the Charter; 20 C/Res. 7.4; 21 C/Res. 7.13; 4XC/Res. XV.9; 22 C/Res. 15.7; 23 C/Res. 18.3; 24 C/Res. 18.2; 25 C/Res. 15.212; 26 C/Res. 13.2; 27 C/Res. 13.12; 29 C/Res. 61; 30 C/Res. 59; 31 C/Res. 46

**Implementation of recommendations adopted at the meetings of National Commissions:** 20 C/Res. 7.4; 21 C/Res. 7.13;

**Standing Committee of National Commissions for UNESCO:** 29 C/Res. 62; 30 C/Res. 62; 31 C/Res. 47

**Implementation of joint projects among National Commissions:** Articles I and V of the Charter; 25 C/Res. 15.212

**National Commissions as intermediaries between Headquarters and national partners:** 26 C/Res. 13.2; 27 C/Res. 13.12

**Forging new partnerships through National Commissions:** 28 C/Res. 13.5; 30 C/Res. 59; 31 C/Res. 46

**Cooperation between National Commissions and UNESCO Clubs, Centres and Associations:** 24 C/Res. 18.2; 26 C/Res. 13.2; 27 C/Res. 13.12

**Cooperation of National Commissions with other agencies and organizations of the UN System:** Article I of the Charter; 25 C/Res. 15.212; 27 C/Res. 13.12; 30 C/Res. 83