

MINUTES

STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE INTERSECTORAL PLATFORM ON ANTICIPATION AND FORESIGHT 12 March 2009

I. Participation

The meeting was chaired by Hans d'Orville, ADG/BSP. Present were also: Ana Luiza Machado (DADG/ED); Sabine Detzel (ED); Cordula Gaschutz (CI); Irmgarda Kasinskaite (CI); Peter Koltermann (IOC); Douglas Nakashima (SC); Tony Marjoram (SC); Philippe Ratte (CLT); John Crowley (SHS); Ana Elisa Santana Afonso (AFR); Michael Millward (DIR/SCG); Faye Adda (BB); Jean-Yves Le Saux, Sanye Gulser Corat, Jacques Plouin, Caroline Descombris (BSP).

II. Introduction by ADG/BSP

The agenda of the meeting was adopted and the minutes of the previous Steering Committee meeting were approved without amendments.

III. Debrief of the first UNESCO Future Forum on the Global Economic and Financial Crisis

ADG/BSP noted that the Forum's cost was less than \$58 000, which could be considered quite cost effective. The economies realised, managed very well by Caroline Descombris, left additional funds available for other platform projects.

The members of the Steering Committee expressed their general satisfaction with the organisation and conduct of the first UNESCO Future Forum. Its visibility on line and in the international press; the quality of the interventions and the high attendance throughout the day by staff and permanent delegates was considered to be particularly noteworthy.

On the communication side, it was noted that the website was particularly satisfying and effective; as many delegations and staff members appeared to have followed the proceedings by webcast. The cooperation with BPI was considered excellent and setting a standard for future events.

While agreeing that the UNESCO Future Forum series was a first step in the right direction, the members debated whether its format could and should be modified. Some felt that there were too many panel sessions and too many panellists. On the other hand it was recognized that the density of the programme allowed to show in one go a diversity of views and explore various fields and types of impact in the crisis setting.

Members expressed concern as to the quality gap between the interventions by panellists and the questions by the audience. It was also noted that more questions should have been asked by staff and delegates.

It was also agreed that the various Programme sectors should engage in specific follow-up review and initiatives on items discussed during the day.

IV. UNESCO Future Forum on Knowledge Acquisition and Sharing

The Steering Committee discussed also the revised concept note and the preparations for the second UNESCO Future Forum, again to be implemented under the auspices of the Intersectoral Platform on Anticipation and Foresight.

The representative of CI presented the revised concept note for the Forum, now benefitting from input by ED and SC. The Forum is scheduled to be held on 11 May 2009 at the UNESCO Headquarters (in Room IV), with the Director-General confirmed as opening speaker.

Members noted with satisfaction the improved concept note and its clear intersectoral character.

Some members suggested that the substantive framework of the event should include a reflection on the changing modes of knowledge and information; that it should be closely tied to the Medium-term Strategy rather than organised solely around the Kronberg Declaration; and that it should address issues related to development, economy, culture and ethics.

The Forum has an estimated budget of US\$59,000, which will be funded both by resources available under the Foresight Programme and from the CI Sector.

It was agreed that by 23 March 2009:

- CI will further revise its proposal in consultation with Jean-Yves Le Saux;
- Three or four experts and one moderator will be identified for each of the three panels. Sectors were invited to propose names, bearing in mind the desirability of gender and geographic diversity.

V. Other Matters

1. *“Foresight for Development”- project to promote foresight in science, engineering and innovation for international cooperation and development; and International Forum on Science and Technology Future proposed by SC.*

The representative of SC presented a revised concept note for the two activities. Regarding the Foresight for Development project, the members of the steering committee agreed that before taking concrete steps there should be a review of the work already done in this area.

During the debate on the Forum on Science and Technology Future, several points were raised:

- the event could be cast as a follow-up meeting to the first UNESCO Future Forum;
- the “science fiction” dimension proposed as an integral part of the Forum should be managed with judgement and caution.

2. *Pursuit of an event, led by ED, around the theme of ICTs and Education*

The representative of ED made a brief presentation on a forthcoming event scheduled to take place in June on ICTs and Education. A concept note will be drafted soon and sent to the members of the Steering Committee.

3. Sessions of the UNESCO Future Forum to be held in Seoul and Montreal in 2009

ADG/BSP presented 2 sessions of the Future Forum away from Headquarters, one to be held in Seoul within the framework of the World Civic Forum focusing on the impact of the financial and economic crisis (5-8 May 2009) and the other in Montreal within the framework of the International Economic Forum of the Americas/Conference of Montreal focusing on bioethics (8-11 June 2009). The Steering Committee welcomed both events. The representative of SHS proposed the Chair of the Intergovernmental Bioethics Committee as a potential speaker for the Forum to be held in Montreal.

4. Event on issues addressed by the International Experts Meeting on the Sustainable Development of the Arctic in the Face of Global climate Change: Scientific, Social, Cultural and Educational Challenges, held from 3 to 6 March 200 in Monaco with the participation of the Director-General

Originally suggested by ADG/IOC, the proposal was presented by the representative of SC who noted that the intersectoral aspects of the event have been well identified and the next step should consist of a forward-looking exercise.

Activities concerning climate change could be envisaged in collaboration with WMO in particular in the perspective of the World Climate Conference.

Concerning climate change, attention should particularly be paid to the scientific knowledge base, mitigation and adaptation.

5. Members agreed that a future Forum event should be envisaged to deal with the impact of the crisis on culture. CLT should submit a proposal.

VI. Next meeting

April 2009