



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

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

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

Организация
Объединенных Наций по
вопросам образования,
науки и культуры

منظمة الأمم المتحدة
للتربية والعلم والثقافة

联合国教育、
科学及文化组织

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

To Secretaries-General
of National Commissions for UNESCO

Réf. : ERI/NCS/NAC/12.44

23 FEB. 2012

Sir/Madam,

On the eve of the 189th session of the Executive Board, I am pleased to be in touch with you again for this eleventh issue of our monthly newsletter.

Those colleagues present in Paris, are invited to a special meeting for National Commissions, that will take place on 29 February 2012, during the Board session. We will then have the opportunity to discuss latest developments in the Organization of interest to you, notably:

- follow-up to the review of the UNESCO's Secretariat's cooperation with the National Commissions;
- regional consultations with National Commissions on the preparation of draft documents 37 C/4 and 37 C/5;
- the Participation Programme;
- celebration of major events and launch of world reports at the national level;
- UNESCO's relations with NGOs.

International Women's Day (8 March)

The goal of International Women's Day is to highlight internationally questions relating to women's empowerment and the promotion of gender equality. The theme for International Women's Day 2012 is "Empower Rural Women – End Hunger and Poverty". You are of course invited to celebrate the Day in your respective countries and to inform us about your initiatives, which we will then post online on the [Forum for National Commissions](#).

World Press Freedom Day (3 May)

Through this World Day, which many amongst you celebrate at the national level, UNESCO reminds governments of the need to abide by their commitments in respect of press freedom. It is also a day of support for media bodies trammelled by restrictions and a day in remembrance of journalists who have lost their lives in the performance of their profession.

The 2012 Day will be dedicated to three themes:

- Media Freedom has the Power to Transform Societies;
- Difficulty in the Access to Quality Information Undermines Media Freedom;
- Challenges to Media in a New Environment.

On the occasion of World Press Freedom Day, the UNESCO/Guillermo Cano World Press Freedom Prize will be awarded. This Prize, established in 1997, is to recognize a person, organization or institution that has made an outstanding contribution to the defence and/or promotion of press freedom, especially if this involved risk. The prize is awarded on the recommendation of an independent jury comprising 12 professional journalists. The award gives international recognition that journalists deserve on the occasion of World Press Freedom Day, to be celebrated on 3 May 2012, in Tunis.

Twentieth anniversary of the establishment of the Memory of the World Programme

As part of the celebration of the twentieth anniversary of the establishment of the Memory of the World programme, UNESCO will hold an international conference from 26 to 28 September 2012 in Vancouver (BC), Canada. The goal of this international conference, entitled "The Memory of the World in the Digital Age: Digitization and Preservation", is to formulate strategies that afford greater protection for digital data and to identify an appropriate implementation methodology for developing countries.

On this occasion, UNESCO again appeals for nominations for inclusion in its Memory of the World Register. You are invited to submit new nominations that meet the selection criteria laid down in the General Guidelines to Safeguard Documentary Heritage, by 31 March 2012 (Contact: Joie Springer, Memory of the World Programme Knowledge Society Division, j.springer@unesco.org).

Forthcoming UNESCO publications

- "From Green Economies to Green Societies: UNESCO's Commitment to Sustainable Development" has been published in English and French by the Bureau of Strategic Planning (BSP).

The green economy is an important pillar of renewed efforts to integrate environmental and social considerations with the mainstream of economic decision-making in the run-up to the upcoming United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) in June 2012, and beyond. This publication presents UNESCO's vision and action for sustainable development. It also intends to stimulate a debate on collective and actionable outcomes which will put the world on the path towards a green economy and green societies through improved international governance.

This publication is available for free in print and electronic form. Readers may access the electronic version at <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0021/002133/213311e.pdf>

- The "World Atlas of Gender Equality in Education" will be published in English, French and Spanish by the Education Sector and the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS).

The education of girls and women is important not only as a matter of respecting a basic human right for half the world's population but as a powerful force for economic development and social goals such as enhanced health, nutrition and civic involvement. This atlas presents the latest data from the UNESCO Institute of Statistics on trends in educational access and progression, from pre-primary through tertiary levels and adult literacy, with special attention to the all-important issue of gender equality. Colour-coded maps make it easier for readers to visualize global and regional trends and to understand how they are shaped by national wealth and geographic location, among other factors.

The English version will be launched on International Women's Day (8 March 2012). This title will be available in print for commercial distribution. Readers will soon be able to consult an interactive version, regularly updated, at www.unesco.org/data/atlas-education-gender

Appointment of Presidents and Secretaries-General of National Commissions for UNESCO (mid-January/mid-February 2012)

In Curaçao (new Associate Member of UNESCO), Ms Marva Browne has been appointed Secretary-Genera.

In Egypt, Mr. Hussein Mustafa Moussa has been appointed Chairperson, succeeding Dr. Motaz Khorshid

In Malta, Mr. Henry Frendo has been appointed Chairperson, succeeding Mr. Charles J. Farrugia.

In Morocco, Mr. Mohamed El Ouafa has been appointed President, succeeding Mr. Ahmed Akhchichine.

In Portugal, Mr. António Almeida Ribeiro has been appointed President, succeeding Mr. M. Fernando Andresen Guimarães.

In Thailand, Mr. Surachart Thadathamrongvech has been appointed Chairperson, succeeding Mr. Woravat Auapinyakul.

In Yemen, Mr. Abdelrazak Al Ashwal has been appointed as Chairperson, succeeding Mr. Abdulsalam M. Al Joufi.

In Lebanon, Prof. Zahida Darwiche Jabbour has been appointed as Secretary-General, succeeding Ms. Salwa Saniora Baassiri.

In Chile, Mr. Harald Beyer Burgos has been appointed as President, succeeding Mr. Felipe Bulnes Serrano.

In Maldives, Dr. Asim Ahmed has been appointed as Chairperson, succeeding Ms. Shifa Mohamed.

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



Eric Falt