



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

# Executive Board

Hundred and ninety-first session

# 191 EX/31

PARIS, 15 March 2013  
Original: French

Item 31 of the provisional agenda

## RELATIONS WITH NON-GOVERNMENTAL PARTNERS

### Summary

The Director-General submits this document to the Executive Board pursuant to 188 EX/Decision 12 and 190 EX/Decision 36 and in accordance with the new Directives concerning UNESCO's partnership with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) (36 C/Resolution 108) and the Directives concerning UNESCO's relations with foundations and similar institutions.

The reclassification of UNESCO's NGO partners to associate status and the admission of new NGOs and foundations to official relations are submitted to the Executive Board for decision or information, as the case may be. This document also contains the conclusions of the International Conference of NGOs (Paris, 12-14 December 2012).

This document is to be considered with document 191 EX/NGP/2.

This item has no administrative or financial implications.

Action expected of the Executive Board: proposed decision in paragraph 15.

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

1. Pursuant to its terms of reference (188 EX/Decision 12), the Committee on Non-Governmental Partners (NPG) will meet during the 191st session of the Executive Board to consider various issues under the item entitled "Relations with non-governmental partners". It will discuss in particular the statutory matters concerning the admission and reclassification of partnerships with NGOs and relations with foundations. Furthermore, the Committee will pursue its interactive policy dialogue with NGOs and the Secretariat on specific matters relevant to UNESCO's programmes and priorities: there will thus be a session devoted to an open debate on synergies between UNESCO and NGOs concerning water cooperation.

2. In response to 190 EX/Decision 36, this document also reports in section III on the conclusions of the International Conference of NGOs (Paris, 12-14 December 2012), particularly with regard to the collective contribution of NGOs to the elaboration of the draft C/4 and C/5 documents.

## **II. ADMISSIONS AND RECLASSIFICATION OF RELATIONS WITH NGOS AND FOUNDATIONS**

3. In application of the Directives concerning UNESCO's partnership with non-governmental organizations and the Directives concerning UNESCO's relations with foundations and similar institutions, the following points are called to the attention of the Executive Board for decision or information, as the case may be.

### **A. Reclassification of NGOs to associate status**

4. As provided in sections III and IV.1.B of the Directives concerning UNESCO's partnership with non-governmental organizations, the Executive Board shall decide on the admission of NGO partners to associate status for a renewable duration of eight years, on the recommendation of the Director-General.

5. Any international or regional partner organization with consultative status for at least two years may submit a request for admission to associate status. Therefore, following examination of the applications submitted by NGO partners – within the deadlines and accompanied by the required documentation – the Director-General considers that, in view of their close collaboration with UNESCO in the Organization's fields of activity, the following two NGOs meet the criteria for admission to associate status and therefore recommends to the Executive Board their reclassification to associate status (corresponding fact sheets are provided in Annex I of document 191 EX/NGP/2):

- B'nai B'rith International (BBI)
- Observatory of Cultural Policies in Africa (OCPA)

### **B. Admissions**

6. The Executive Board is informed of decisions by the Director-General since its 189th session on admissions to official partnership with consultative status with respect to the following seven organizations (corresponding fact sheets are provided in Annex II of document 191 EX/NGP/2):

- Global Campaign for Education (GCE)
- Femmes Africa Solidarité (FAS)
- Ki-Zerbo Foundation
- Forest Peoples Programme (FPP)
- International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs (IWGIA)
- Rencontres du Vietnam
- Surfrider Foundation Europe.

7. The Executive Board is also informed by the Director-General of her decision to establish official relations with the following two foundations for a renewable period of six years (corresponding fact sheets are provided in Annex III of document 191 EX/NGP/2):

- Fundación Celeste
- Indian Heritage Cities Network Foundation (IHCN-F).

### III. INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF NGOS

8. The International Conference of NGOs, an element of collective cooperation explicitly provided for by the new Directives and held every two years, is a key forum for meeting and dialogue among NGOs in official partnership with UNESCO. In particular, it is intended to “review the state of cooperation with UNESCO [...] and facilitate cooperation between organizations having common interests”.

9. Organized in close cooperation with the Secretariat and the NGO-UNESCO Liaison Committee, the International Conference of NGOs, held at Headquarters from 12 to 14 December 2012, attracted widespread interest and participation of NGOs – 129 partner NGOs were represented compared to 70 at the previous conference – as well as interest from observer NGOs and Member States, some of which had come to observe the NGOs collective work for the first time. Almost 300 participants attended the Conference at UNESCO Headquarters and many others followed a webcast of the debates online.

10. The theme chosen for the conference in 2012 was “Culture and Cultures: Reconciling Universality and Diversity”. Workshops on “culture and education”, “culture and science” and “culture and development” contributed to the collective discussion around the central theme.

11. At the end of the International Conference, the NGOs present adopted two texts:<sup>1</sup>

- the resolution establishing the roadmap for the collective action of NGOs over the next two years;
- the collective contribution of NGOs to the elaboration of the draft C/4 and C/5 documents, annexed to this document.

12. The NGOs decided, in particular, to focus their efforts over the next two years on the following priority areas: Africa, gender equality, human rights, education for all, youth, cultural diversity, social inclusion and poverty eradication, particularly through the implementation of specific projects. They also welcomed the establishment of bridges (exchanges, meetings, mutual support, networks and projects) between the different types of UNESCO’s non-governmental partners for mutual enrichment and increased impact of their action.

13. Lastly, the International Conference elected Mr Patrick Gallaud as Chairperson and the following NGOs as members of the NGO-UNESCO Liaison Committee for a period of two years: World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (WAGGGS) (United Kingdom); International Council for Adult Education (ICAE) (Uruguay); International Council on Education for Teaching (ICET) (United States of America); International Council of Museums (ICOM) (France); Dhaka Ahsania Mission (Bangladesh); International Federation of Coalitions for Cultural Diversity (IFCCD) (Canada); Sozopol Foundation (Bulgaria); Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE) (Kenya); Catholic International Education Office (OIEC) (Belgium); Rotary International (United States of America). It should be noted that among the 10 organizations elected as members of the Committee, there are now, for the first time, NGOs from different regions of the world (five out of the six regions defined by UNESCO).

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<sup>1</sup> All documentation concerning the International Conference of NGOs is available online in English and French ([www.unesco.int](http://www.unesco.int) and [www.unesco.org/en/ngo](http://www.unesco.org/en/ngo))

#### IV. OTHER MATTERS RELATING TO COOPERATION WITH NGOS

14. In January 2013, the freshly elected NGO-UNESCO Liaison Committee held its first meeting to identify the strategy lines and plan of action for the collective cooperation of NGOs in 2013-2014. Thus, the Committee will coordinate the organization of two forums per year, as provided for by the new Directives, around themes among UNESCO's priorities; efforts will be made in cooperation with the Secretariat so that some of these forums are held outside UNESCO Headquarters, particularly in Africa and Asia, to promote the mobilization of NGOs in these regions. In addition, NGOs will campaign to organize events around the celebration of international days that are particularly relevant to UNESCO's collective priorities.

##### Proposed draft decision

15. After examining this document, the Executive Board may wish to adopt a decision along the following lines:

The Executive Board,

1. Recalling 188 EX/Decision 12 and 190 EX/Decision 36, as well as 36 C/Resolution 108 and 29 C/Resolution 64,
2. Having examined documents 191 EX/31 and 191 EX/NGP/2,
3. Appreciates the efforts made to promote a greater geographical diversity, both in the network of NGOs in official partnerships as well as in their collective cooperation with UNESCO and invites the Secretariat and the NGO-UNESCO Liaison Committee to continue their efforts in that direction;
4. Appreciates also the new mobilization of NGOs in their collective action and the refocusing of this action on the Organization's priorities for the realization of specific projects that are particularly relevant to UNESCO's programme priorities;
5. <sup>2</sup>
6. Takes note of the Director-General's decisions on the admission to consultative status of seven new non-governmental organizations listed in section II.B, para. 6, of document 191 EX/31;
7. Further takes note of the Director-General's decisions on the establishment of official relations with two new foundations listed in section II.B, para. 7, of document 191 EX/31;
8. Decides to admit to associate status the two UNESCO non-governmental organization partners, listed in section II.A, para. 5, of document 191 EX/31.

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<sup>2</sup> Paragraph to be completed in the light of the Committee's debate on synergies between UNESCO and NGOs concerning water cooperation.

## ANNEX

### **INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF NGOs** *UNESCO Headquarters, 12-14 December 2012*

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#### **NGOs Contribution to the Preparation of 37 C/4 and 37 C/5**

The International Conference of NGOs took note of the preliminary proposals by the Director-General concerning the Draft Medium Term Strategy (2014-2021) (37 C/4) and the Draft Programme and Budget of the Organization for 2014-2017 (37 C/5) as well as the orientations outlined by the 190th session of the Executive Board.

As foreseen in Chapter VII (iii) of the Directives concerning UNESCO's partnership with NGOs, adopted by the 36th session of the General Conference, the International Conference of NGOs hereby transmits its views and suggestions to the Director-General in the context of the preparation of documents 37 C/4 and 37 C/5.

#### UNESCO's Mission

The International Conference considers that UNESCO's mission statement should be anchored in the Organization's founding texts and expresses its preference for the following formulation:

*As a specialized agency of the United Nations, UNESCO contributes to the building of peace, eradication of poverty, sustainable development and intercultural dialogue through education, sciences, culture, communication and information. (Executive Board proposal 190 EX/Decision 19)*

#### Fields of competence

The International Conference considers that the fields of competence of the Organization should remain education, sciences, culture, and communication and information, regardless of the structures the Organization may put in place to re-focus its action, encourage interdisciplinarity and synergy.

#### Youth as Global Priority

The International Conference considers that youth and its empowerment should be recognized as the Organization's third global priority as Africa and Gender Equality. This priority should, in any case, be integrated in programme planning and implementation in the field in an intersectoral manner.

#### Education

Within the context of lifelong learning opportunities for all, UNESCO shall promote education services that are inclusive and quality education, from education and protection of early childhood to higher education paying particular attention to the crucial role played by teachers and the need for dialogue with students and parents. Moreover, within the context of discussions concerning the global agenda in education from now on and after 2015, UNESCO shall continue to continue to reinforce its leadership in Education for All (EFA) in order to achieve the EFA Goals.

#### Sciences

In the field of sciences, NGOs consider that global challenges such as climate change, environmental change or access to water shall continue to receive priority attention.

Interdisciplinarity shall be encouraged in the analysis of these issues and in formulating responses based on a regional approach. Doing so, it is important to ensure that the contribution of human and social sciences is preserved with specific programmes. Thus, it is necessary to continue the analysis of ethical issues raised by the development and use of sciences. The issue of development and management of clean energies, and the impact of crises on vulnerable populations should also be included in the programmes. The analysis of problems in the fields of biology and life sciences should also be pursued.

### Culture

UNESCO shall continue its work to promote culture and creativity as a pillar of sustainable development. In addition, it shall increase its commitment to the protection and promotion of natural and cultural heritage, intangible cultural heritage and the diversity of cultural expressions, with particular attention to indigenous peoples and ethnic minorities, and for the protection of intellectual property of their knowledge and traditional cultural expressions.

UNESCO shall promote culture of peace and non-violence by promoting dialogue between cultures and religions, human rights education and reconciliation in countries that have experienced conflicts. UNESCO shall continue promoting linguistic diversity and multilingualism as key means to reconcile universality and cultural diversity.

### Communication and Information

Action in the fields of communication and information in general, freedom of opinion and expression, development of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs), and media diversity more specifically, should not be scaled down. UNESCO shall be more ambitious in integrating the evolution of ICTs to allow everyone to find their place in the knowledge society of today and tomorrow. It shall also strengthen its action in favour of free and open dissemination of knowledge and free flow of information.

### Partnerships

The International Conference appreciates the Director-General's emphasis on strengthened cooperation and partnerships. While recognizing the necessity of seeking new partners, it nonetheless considers that UNESCO should demonstrate its attachment to the already vast and varied networks of civil society partners who enrich the definition and implementation of the Organization's mandate in its fields of competence. We recommend therefore that UNESCO should strengthen its many partnerships, especially those with non-governmental organizations.