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Organización
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para la Educación,
la Ciencia y la Cultura

Организация
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منظمة الأمم المتحدة
للتربية والعلم والثقافة

联合国教育、
科学及文化组织

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Item 8.4 of the provisional agenda

**SECOND CONSOLIDATED REPORT ON THE MEASURES TAKEN
BY MEMBER STATES FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RECOMMENDATION
CONCERNING THE PROMOTION AND USE OF MULTILINGUALISM
AND UNIVERSAL ACCESS TO CYBERSPACE**

OUTLINE

Source: 33 C/Resolution 54; 34 C/Resolution 49; 186 EX/Decision 19 Part IV.

Background: In accordance with the new procedures adopted in 2007 for the monitoring of the implementation of UNESCO conventions and recommendations for which no specific institutional mechanism is provided (177 EX/Decision 35 Part I), the Executive Board has adopted a multi-stage procedure for the monitoring of the implementation of these standard-setting instruments, including the 2003 Recommendation concerning the Promotion and Use of Multilingualism and Universal Access to Cyberspace (34 C/Resolution 87).

Pursuant to 34 C/Resolution 49, the Director-General hereby transmits to the General Conference the second consolidated report on the implementation of this Recommendation which has also been examined by the Executive Board at its 186th session.

No financial and administrative implications are anticipated from the proposed decision.

Purpose: This document presents the status of implementation of this Recommendation and provides information on the measures taken by Member States for its promotion and application covering the period of 2007-2010.

Decision required: paragraph 10.

BACKGROUND

1. The Recommendation concerning the Promotion and Use of Multilingualism and Universal Access to Cyberspace was adopted by the General Conference at its 32nd session (2003). At its 33rd session (2005), the General Conference, after considering that it was important to establish a system of reports on measures taken by Member States to implement this Recommendation, requested each Member State to prepare and submit to the Secretariat a first report on such measures by the end of the month of January 2007, and subsequently once every four years with effect from that date (33 C/Resolution 54).

2. At its 34th session (2007), the General Conference took note of the first consolidated report on the measures taken by Member States for the implementation of the Recommendation and invited the Director-General to submit to it at its 36th session the second consolidated report on the measures taken by Member States for the implementation of this Recommendation (34 C/Resolution 49). It should be recalled in this connection that the submission by Member States of reports on the action taken by them upon the recommendations adopted by the General Conference is provided for under Article VIII of the Constitution, as well as under Article 17 of the Rules of Procedure concerning recommendations to Member States and international conventions covered by the terms of Article IV, paragraph 4, of the Constitution.

3. Furthermore, the Executive Board adopted, at its 177th session (177 EX/Decision 35 (I)), a multi-stage procedure for the implementation of UNESCO conventions and recommendations for which no specific institutional mechanism is provided, including this 2003 Recommendation (34 C/Resolution 87). In compliance with the timetable for 2009-2013 of work of the Committee on Conventions and Recommendations of the Executive Board (CR) on the implementation of these standard-setting instruments for whose monitoring the Board is responsible (182 EX/Decision 31, 184 EX/Decision 20 and 186 EX/Decision 19 (I)), this second consolidated report was examined by the Executive Board at its 186th session (186 EX/19 Part IV) and is submitted consequently to the General Conference at its present session.

CONSOLIDATED REPORT

4. The annexed document 186 EX/19 Part IV presents to the General Conference the second consolidated report prepared by the Secretariat. It outlines the major findings collected during the elaboration of the report and reflects the main challenges and tendencies of the implementation process. As requested by the General Conference, this report is completed by the comments made by the Members of the CR Committee at the 186th session of the Board.

5. During the debate on this item, CR Members expressed appreciation of the information gathered, analysed and presented in the document by the Secretariat.

6. The observation was made that, in the reporting process, achievements by Member States may be completed by other sources of information, since numerous challenges are faced at national level. In this context, one CR Member suggested introducing concrete examples of recent developments related to the promotion of multilingualism in cyberspace.

7. It was also considered that the Secretariat should continue encouraging Member States to use and implement this Recommendation. The Board also observed that only 24 Member States submitted reports for the second consultation. One more contribution was received after the deadline from the Syrian Arab Republic. Although the elements of the report do not appear in the consolidated report because of the delay in receiving them, this contribution will be nevertheless taken into consideration in conceiving the modalities for the intensification of the implementation process of this Recommendation.

8. In his response to the debate on this item, the Assistant Director-General for Communication and Information expressed, on behalf of the Director-General, his appreciation of the importance

given by the Board to this Recommendation. He also thanked the Member States which had participated in the reporting process and reaffirmed the importance of the periodic consultation on the implementation of this Recommendation. Regarding the question on recent developments for the promotion of the multilingualism in cyberspace, he indicated that the internationalization of the domain names (IDNs) and their representation in local language characters as well as the IDN ccTLD Fast Track Process launched by the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) in 2009 were among the most important Internet developments since its inception which would contribute to the development of a multilingual Internet.

9. After examining document 186 EX/19 Part IV and the report of the CR Committee thereon, the Executive Board invited the Director-General to transmit to the General Conference, at its 36th session, the second consolidated report on the measures taken by Member States for the implementation of this Recommendation, together with the comments by the Board as presented above.

PROPOSED RESOLUTION

10. After examining this document, the General Conference may wish to adopt the following resolution:

The General Conference,

1. Recalling 33 C/Resolution 54 and 34 C/Resolution 49 as well as 186 EX/Decision 19 Part IV,
2. Also recalling 177 EX/Decision 35 (I) and 34 C/Resolution 87 on the monitoring of the implementation of UNESCO conventions and recommendations for which no specific institutional mechanism is provided,
3. Having examined document 36 C/26,
4. Takes note that only 24 Member States submitted reports for the second consultation;
5. Recalls that the submission by Member States of periodic reports on the implementation of recommendations adopted by the General Conference is an obligation under Article VIII of UNESCO's Constitution and Article 17 of the Rules of Procedure concerning recommendations to Member States and international conventions covered by the terms of Article IV, paragraph 4, of the Constitution;
6. Further recalls that the periodic consultation of Member States on the implementation of the Recommendation is intended to enable the Organization to assess both the extent to which Member States are implementing that instrument and the obstacles that they encounter in this regard;
7. Reaffirms the importance of this Recommendation and its implementation by Member States;
8. Invites those Member States which have not taken measures to implement the Recommendation to do so and to contribute to the reporting process established by the General Conference;
9. Invites the Director-General to transmit to it at its 38th session the third consolidated report on the implementation of this recommendation and decides to inscribe this item in the agenda of its 38th session.



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

Executive Board
Hundred and eighty-sixth session

186 EX/19
Part IV

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Item 19 of the provisional agenda

IMPLEMENTATION OF STANDARD-SETTING INSTRUMENTS

PART IV

**APPLICATION OF THE 2003 RECOMMENDATION
CONCERNING THE PROMOTION AND USE OF MULTILINGUALISM
AND UNIVERSAL ACCESS TO CYBERSPACE**

SUMMARY

In accordance with the new procedures adopted in 2007 for the monitoring of the implementation of UNESCO conventions and recommendations for which no specific institutional mechanism is provided (177 EX/Decision 35 Parts I and II), the Executive Board has adopted a multi-stage procedure for the monitoring of the implementation of these standard-setting instruments, including the Recommendation concerning the Promotion and Use of Multilingualism and Universal Access to Cyberspace (2003).

Pursuant to 34 C/Resolution 49 and in compliance with the timetable for 2009-2013 of work of the Committee on Conventions and Recommendations on the implementation of these standard-setting instruments (182 EX/Decision 31 and 184 EX/Decision 20), the Director-General submits to the 186th session of the Executive Board the second consolidated report on the implementation of this Recommendation prepared on the basis of the information collected from Member States, before its transmission to the 36th session of the General Conference.

No financial and administrative implications are anticipated from the proposed decision.

Action expected of the Executive Board: decision in paragraph 33.

BACKGROUND

1. The Recommendation concerning the Promotion and Use of Multilingualism and Universal Access to Cyberspace was adopted on 15 October 2003 by the General Conference at its 32nd session. At its 33rd session, in October 2005, the General Conference, after considering that it was important to establish a system of reports on measures taken by Member States to implement this Recommendation, requested each Member State to prepare and submit to the Secretariat a first report on such measures by the end of the month of January 2007, and subsequently once every four years with effect from that date (33 C/Resolution 54).

2. At its 34th session, the General Conference took note of the first consolidated report on the measures taken by Member States for the implementation of the Recommendation and invited the Director-General to transmit to it at its 36th session the second consolidated report on the measures taken by Member States for the implementation of this Recommendation (34 C/Resolution 49). It should be recalled in this connection that the submission by Member States of reports on the action taken by them upon the recommendations adopted by the General Conference is provided for under Article VIII of the Constitution.

3. As well as under Article 17 of the Rules of Procedure concerning recommendations to Member States and international conventions covered by the terms of Article IV, paragraph 4, of the Constitution. Furthermore, the Executive Board adopted, at its 177th session, a multi-stage procedure for the implementation of UNESCO conventions and recommendations for which no specific institutional mechanism is provided, including this 2003 Recommendation (177 EX/Decision 35 (I)). In compliance with the timetable for 2009-2013 of work of the Committee on Conventions and Recommendations on the implementation of these standard-setting instruments for whose monitoring the Board is responsible (182 EX/Decision 31 and 184 EX/Decision 20), this second consolidated report is submitted to the present session of the Board.

SECOND CONSOLIDATED REPORT

4. Following the adoption of 34 C/Resolution 49, the Director-General, by a letter dated 11 June 2010 (CL/3926), invited all Member States to transmit to the Organization their reports on the implementation of the Recommendation concerning the Promotion and Use of Multilingualism and Universal Access to Cyberspace by 31 December 2010.

5. By means of a reminder dated 15 October 2010 (CI/INF/UAP/2010/IKB/229), the Assistant Director-General for Communication and Information also encouraged Member States to prepare and submit to the Organization by the fixed deadline a full report.

6. As at 18 February 2011 the Secretariat had received 24 reports from the following Member States: Azerbaijan, Canada, Colombia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Egypt, Finland, Germany, Guinea, Hungary, Israel, Japan, Jordan, Lithuania, Malaysia, Monaco, Nigeria, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Rwanda, Spain, Syrian Arab Republic and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

Elements for reporting on the specific provisions of the Recommendation

Development of multilingual content and systems

7. Despite the unfavourable economic environment over the past four years, the majority of Member States, which submitted reports, had strengthened multilingualism in cyberspace by developing and adopting appropriate language policies, laws and strategies. Those actions allowed Member States to establish and strengthen institutional capacities to access and monitor changes in language in relation with existing Information Society strategies. For instance, Germany established frameworks for protection of national minorities, including aspects related to the

inclusion of languages on the Internet and linked those to other international normative instruments such as the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages.

8. Particular attention in the reports was paid to the use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) for teaching of national and foreign languages in formal and non-formal education settings. For instance, Azerbaijan, Egypt, Israel, Malaysia, Monaco, Rwanda, Spain, Syrian Arab Republic and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, developed educational programmes and invested substantial efforts to increase capacities of professional communities, including teachers at various levels, to teach languages while increasingly using ICTs in education. Malaysia provided a Networked Content Development Grant for the development of local content in various e-formats.

9. Some Member States (Canada, Egypt, Jordan and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia) consider that the development of multilingual content and systems might safeguard tangible and intangible cultural heritage as well as share cultural heritage products worldwide. For instance, Egypt established a Centre for Documentation of Cultural and Natural Heritage aiming to promote cultural heritage, increase Arabic content on the web and provide access to information for researchers and scholars.

10. Jordan, Canada and Colombia supported the creation of online interactive content and applications developed by language minority communities as well as promoted the work of not-for-profit cultural organizations. Colombia and Nigeria used radios for the promotion of indigenous languages.

11. Several Member States (Canada, Dominican Republic, Egypt, Germany, Hungary, Nigeria) made substantial efforts to create national digital libraries, archives and museums in order to preserve and provide access to digital heritage. For instance, the German National Library is working on the multilingual retrieval of, and access to, digital and analogue content in library holdings. Canada has several projects to make interactive content and applications accessible for all, regardless of geographic location, existing technology, or disabilities.

12. Hungary, Lithuania and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, developed language processing computer tools such as automatic translation tools. Jordan created a search engine in Arabic (ARABI) and Colombia promoted tools for safeguarding indigenous languages.

13. Egypt and Jordan reported on successful experience in launching the Internet domain names using Arabic letters (Arabic ccTLD within the framework of ICANN's IDN fast track process). The number of websites in ".az" domain used by Azerbaijan has increased four times in comparison with 2006 and measures were taken to provide the use of the letters of the Azerbaijani alphabet in domain names.

14. Several Member States (Denmark, Egypt, Guinea, Spain) indicated that they built capacities of the Internet users and persons with disabilities for creating digital local content by using ICTs. The training on using ICTs in teaching foreign languages was provided to professional educational communities. Some Member States made efforts to improve the information accessibility scheme by creating Cybercafés, computer and community centres, which provide access to knowledge in remote areas (Azerbaijan, Colombia, Rwanda).

Facilitating access to networks and services

15. The majority of Member States reported on initiatives undertaken to increase broadband connectivity, including various legislative measures and concrete national broadband projects developed to provide establishment of Wi-Fi hotspots and telecentres in public, residential and remote areas. Some of these initiatives also specifically targeted distinct social groups such as young people, women, the elderly and persons with disabilities (Azerbaijan, Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Egypt, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Japan, Jordan,

Lithuania, Malaysia, Monaco, Nigeria, Rwanda, Spain and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia).

16. Most of the reports indicate that governments are still looking for concrete solutions to reduce high costs of network infrastructure development and maintenance. Rwanda underscored that there are still challenges ahead related to the technical and technological skills and expertise. In order to expand the existing networks, Germany, for instance, launched studies on suitable financial models.

17. The reports also indicate that several Member States developed infrastructure of public networks, which allow public administration institutions and organizations to improve access to public information of citizens. The Government of Guinea established Internet connections in all public service institutions and created websites covering the respective areas of competence. The country also created adapted infrastructures and network of public Internet Cafés in rural and urban areas. Jordan is creating a national network to access information and use IT in Knowledge Stations in remote areas.

18. Special attention was paid by Member States to enhance computer and digital literacy of public officers and Internet users located in remote and disadvantaged areas. The reports indicate though, that more efforts and financial resources are needed in order to increase the digital literacy level (Azerbaijan, Canada, Colombia, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Egypt, Guinea, Lithuania, Malaysia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia).

19. Specific legislative measures such as the revision of the Communications Market Act in Finland and new strategies, programmes and services in Japan have been implemented taking due account of the needs of persons with disabilities, women, the elderly and communities living in geographically remote areas. Similar developments have been reported also in Canada, Colombia and Denmark.

20. Free Internet access was provided to the users of the public libraries and measures were taken to digitalize the traditional information resources in libraries and archives in Colombia, Dominican Republic, Lithuania and Malaysia.

21. Jordan raised awareness among government officials about the potential of open source software and explored opportunities to use cloud-computing services in economic and social development related activities. Spain introduced the open sources software licenses for educational resources under the Creative Commons license.

Development of public domain content

22. In order to guarantee greater transparency and improve governance, many Member States (Azerbaijan, Canada, Colombia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Egypt, Finland, Germany, Guinea, Hungary, Japan, Lithuania, Malaysia, Monaco, Spain and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia) have taken concrete legislative measures to establish general guiding principles for government and municipality institutions to provide information about their activities and to facilitate the online access to legal and other public domain documents of their citizens. For instance, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia drafted the e-Government National Strategy 2010-2012. In the Czech Republic, the circulation of public information on the Internet is guided by several normative Acts and in Germany by the Freedom of Information Act and the Open Data/Open Government Strategy announced in December 2010.

23. Measures to regulate harmful content on the Internet were taken by the Czech Republic and Lithuania in order to ensure the safe use of public information on the Internet. Moreover, a Cyber Crime and Data Network Department was established in Egypt. Germany identified the IT security as one of the top research priorities. Furthermore, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Lithuania introduced rules that all public websites must be accessible to all citizens and comply

with the requirements stipulated in the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) adopted by the World Wide Web Consortium.

24. Particular attention was paid to ensure that quality educational content is made publicly available on the Internet in the Czech Republic, Spain and Syrian Arab Republic.

Reaffirming the equitable balance between the interest of rights-holders and the public interest

25. The majority of Member States made key provisions in the area of copyright. Thus, Romania aimed at establishing a fair balance between the interests of authors and the public interest by proposing a proper framework including a clear definition of the role of the different stakeholders.

26. Over the period covered by this report, several Member States harmonized their national legislation and aligned those with the international standards such as the European Directives and the WIPO and WTO treaties addressing copyright issues (Azerbaijan, Colombia, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Germany, Malaysia, Monaco, Republic of Moldova, Romania). Egypt, Japan and the Republic of Moldova introduced amendments in their Copyright Laws making easier to use copyrighted materials via Internet and deterring the illegal distribution of copyrighted materials.

27. Other Member States (Azerbaijan, Colombia, Egypt, Jordan, Lithuania, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia) elaborated and adopted new policies, laws and strategies in this area, paying special attention to the protection of consumers' and intellectual property rights, as well as e-signature. The Syrian Virtual University provided courses on copyright protection in cyberspace to their students.

28. Another aspect emphasized in the reports presented by Azerbaijan, Japan and the Republic of Moldova concerned the specific provisions made for facilitating access to knowledge of people with visual impairments, including Braille libraries and transmission of audio works through the Internet. In addition, the Republic of Moldova included a number of adjustments in the existing law dealing with rights-holders and media.

29. Several Member States indicated in their reports (Denmark, Finland, Germany, Jordan, Malaysia) that they support the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) process. Concrete measures were elaborated to monitor decisions made on implementing the WSIS outcomes and coordinating WSIS-related activities with the relevant agencies and departments at national level. For instance, Jordan developed the National ICT Strategy 2007-2011 that incorporate the coordination and implementation of the decisions taken by the WSIS.

CONCLUSION

30. The importance of the system of reports exercise concerning the implementation of this Recommendation is yet to be fully taken into account by Member States. The low number of contributions indicates that instead of an increased interest and commitment, there is a regression reporting compared to the first consolidated report, for which the Secretariat had received 32 reports in 2007. It is therefore important to underscore again that for the reporting mechanisms to be effective, it is indispensable to have the number of Member States participating in the reporting process significantly increased.

31. According to the reports submitted by Member States, some progress has been achieved in the following areas:

- (a) Constitutional, legal, policy and administrative frameworks established and linked to the implementation of this Recommendation, and WSIS objectives incorporated in national policies and programmes.

- (b) Access to information strengthened in the majority of Member States, particularly through improved Broadband connectivity. Greater access to public information by governmental and municipal institutions ensured.
- (c) Measures taken to create, provide access to and disseminate quality content in local languages in cyberspace and through national digital libraries, archives and museums.
- (d) Successful applications made within the framework of the ICANN's IDN fast track process reported and a number of specific activities implemented in order to safeguard endangered languages of indigenous peoples.
- (e) Development of multilingual content and systems seen as an effective way to promote access to digital cultural heritage and products worldwide, including content created by minority communities.
- (f) Capacities for creation of digital local content by using ICTs of the Internet users, public officers, teachers and marginalized groups strengthened, information accessibility schemes improved, language tools created, e-learning systems established in order to provide better access to educational materials in multiple languages online.
- (g) National legislation addressing copyright issues harmonized and aligned with existing international standards.

32. The reports submitted by Member States also denote the following challenges and obstacles:

- (a) Due to the unfavourable economic situation and limited resources, certain difficulties encountered in implementing activities related to the Recommendation.
- (b) Although tangible improvements were reported to strengthen access to information on the Internet, globally the Internet services in many Member States remained costly, limited in availability and in speed. Consequently, a full range of public services on the Internet were mainly provided to a limited number of the population only.
- (c) A slow advance in development of local technical skills and expertise was reported. Appropriate policy response, structural changes, and investment in educational systems are required in order to develop a favourable environment for the creation and access to information and knowledge in cyberspace.
- (d) The rapid growth of the Internet opened new prospects for accessing information and knowledge, but also raised a number of ethical questions. There is a need for further measures in order to ensure that universal values and principles, and fundamental rights are promoted and respected in cyberspace.
- (e) Despite the progress reported, additional efforts are needed for bridging the digital and linguistic divide. The low level of computer and digital literacy and the undeveloped info- and infra-structures created additional barriers for marginalized groups to access information and knowledge on the Internet.

ACTION EXPECTED OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

33. After examining this document, the Executive Board may wish to adopt the following decision:

The Executive Board,

1. Recalling 33 C/Resolution 54 and 34 C/Resolution 49,

2. Also recalling 177 EX/Decision 35 (I), in which it approved a specific multi-stage procedure for the monitoring of the implementation of UNESCO conventions and recommendations for which no specific institutional mechanism is provided,
3. Having examined document 186 EX/19 Part IV and the report of the Committee on Conventions and Recommendations thereon,
4. Notes that only 24 Member States submitted reports for the second consultation;
5. Recalls that the submission by Member States of periodic reports on the implementation of recommendations adopted by the General Conference is an obligation under Article VIII of UNESCO's Constitution and Article 17 of the Rules of Procedure concerning recommendations to Member States and international conventions covered by the terms of Article IV, paragraph 4, of the Constitution;
6. Further recalls that the periodic consultation of Member States on the implementation of the Recommendation is intended to enable the Organization to assess both the extent to which Member States are implementing that instrument and the obstacles that they encounter;
7. Reaffirms the importance of the Recommendation and its implementation by Member States;
8. Recommends that the General Conference invite those Member States which have not taken measures to implement the Recommendation to do so;
9. Invites the Director-General to transmit to the General Conference at its 36th session the second consolidated report on the measures taken by Member States to implement this Recommendation, together with its observations and any observations or comments that the Director-General may wish to make.