



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

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29 February 2016

Sir/Madam,

I just returned from Krakow, where I participated in the 2nd Informal Meeting of the European Network of National Commissions for UNESCO, at the kind invitation of the Polish National Commission. Again, we greatly appreciate the value of this kind of network meetings which provides National Commissions with an opportunity to support joint actions and exchange best practices.

In this regard, I am pleased to confirm that, thanks to the generous offer of the Chinese government, the 3rd Interregional Meeting of National Commissions will take place in Shanghai, China, from 13 to 15 June 2016. More details of this meeting will be communicated to you in due course.

Executive Board

As you know, the 199th session of the Executive Board will meet from 4 to 15 April at UNESCO HQ. Please be reminded that in the margins of this session, a morning meeting of National Commissions will take place on 11 and 12 April.

You can find more information on these forthcoming sessions of the Executive Board, as well as on the first intersession meeting which was held on 19 February, by accessing the [webpage of the Executive Board](#).

14-17 March 2016 – 4th World Congress of Biosphere Reserves, Lima, Peru

Organized by the Secretariat of the Man and Biosphere Programme (MAB), the Ministry of Environment of Peru (MINAM) and its National Service of Natural Areas Protected by the State (SERNANP), and the MAB National Committee of Peru, this event will bring together MAB Committees around the world and experts directly involved in the practical implementation of biosphere reserves, including: representatives of governments, local communities, UN agencies, NGOs and academic institutions.

The Congress will address different topics such as education for sustainable development, economic viability of nature protection systems, human migration and the protection of natural resources, among others. One of the most important outcomes of this Congress will be the adoption of the new Action Plan for Biosphere Reserves 2016-2025.

I encourage you to participate actively in this important event or to follow it closely. Registrations to the Congress are free, upon invitation. You will find more information in the [dedicated website](#).

Contact: Mr Miguel Clüsener-Godt (m.clusener-godt@unesco.org)

15-17 March 2016 - 8th Policy Dialogue Forum of the Teacher Task Force (TTF) for Education 2030, Mexico

The main focus of the Forum will be on sharing relevant policies, practices and tools among international key stakeholders with a view to facilitating the understanding, implementation and monitoring of the teacher-related target in the SDG and new education agenda. The TTF has chosen to concentrate on the theme “Implementing the Teacher Target in the Sustainable Development Goal for education and Education 2030” and will organize the discussions around four sub-themes: Teacher Education; Teaching and Learning; Financing teaching and teacher development; Monitoring the teacher target.

The TTF is the first dedicated international alliance of stakeholders, including national governments, intergovernmental organizations, NGOs, international development agencies and private sector organizations working together to address the “teacher gap”.

Given the theme of the Forum, I am sure that many of you will be interested in visiting the [TTF Website](#) and learn more about its activities.

Contact: Mr Edem Adubra (e.adubra@unesco.org)

22 March 2016 - World Water Day – Launch of the World Water Development Report 2016

Each year, World Water Day highlights a specific aspect of freshwater and its potential contribution to the sustainable development agenda.

The launch of the World Water Development Report (WWDR) 2016 is at the core of the 2016 Water Day official celebrations. The theme of the Day is aligned with that of the report, thus this year the celebration will focus on “Water and Jobs”.

During the official celebration that will take place in Geneva, the main findings of the WWDR 2016 will be revealed to the audience and to the mass media. Copies of the Report and its related materials will also be distributed. A regional launch will also take place on the same day in Beijing, China, to give visibility to the main findings of the Report in the region. An information meeting for Member States will be organized the following day (23 March) at UNESCO Headquarters.

The WWDR - prepared in close collaboration with the 31 members and 35 partners that make up [UN-Water](#) - is produced by the World Water Assessment Programme (WWAP) - which is hosted and led by UNESCO - and presents a review of the world’s water resources.

The success of this Day's celebrations is dependent upon the involvement and the commitment of a broad number of stakeholders, including National Commissions. I hope that many of you foresee the organization of activities that would contribute to the achievement of the goals of this Day.

You will find more information on the report at the following address: <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/natural-sciences/environment/water/wwap/wwdr/> and on the Day following [this link](#).

Contact: Mr Alexander Otte (a.otte@unesco.org) and Mr Laurens Thuy (l.thuy@unesco.org)

24 March 2016 - L'Oréal-UNESCO Awards for Women in Science, Paris, France

Five outstanding women scientists, from all over the world, will receive the 2016 L'Oréal-UNESCO for Women in Science Awards in the field of Life Sciences at a ceremony to be held at the Sorbonne University on 24 March. The five laureates were nominated by more than 2,600 leading scientists and selected by an independent and international jury presided by Professor Elizabeth H. Blackburn, 2008 Laureate L'Oréal-UNESCO for Women in Science, 2009 joint winner of the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine and the first woman Jury President in the history of the awards.

Fifteen talented young women scientists will also receive the International Rising Talent Grants, awarded annually to PhD students and post-doctoral Fellows. Chosen from among the winners of the 236 fellowships awarded locally by L'Oréal subsidiaries and UNESCO around the world, these young researchers are indeed the future of science.

On 23 March, the Laureates and International Rising Talents will come to UNESCO to participate in a debate on "Addressing the gender gap in science" with representatives of Member States.

Founded in 1998, the L'Oréal-UNESCO for Women in Science partnership was created to recognize and promote women in science. You will find more information under [this link](#).

Contact: Ms Lucy Hoareau (l.hoareau@unesco.org)

15 April 2016 – Extension of the deadline for submitting nominations to the 2016 UNESCO-Madanjeet Singh Prize for the Promotion of Tolerance and Non-Violence

The deadline for the submission of candidates for the 2016 UNESCO-Madanjeet Singh Prize for the Promotion of Tolerance and Non-Violence has been extended to **15 April 2015 at midnight (Paris time)**.

I wish to remind that the purpose of the Prize is to reward individuals, institutions and other entities or non-governmental organizations that have made exceptional contributions and demonstrated leadership in the promotion of tolerance and non-violence.

Established through the generous donation of the late UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador, Indian artist, writer and diplomat Mr Madanjeet Singh, its creation in 1995 marked the United Nations Year for Tolerance and the 125th anniversary of the birth of Mahatma Gandhi.

You will find all information on the Prize and the submission of candidatures following [this link](#).

Contact: Ms Golda El-Khoury (tolerance.prize@unesco.org)

UNESCO Publications

- The report entitled *Colour? What Colour?* is now available in [English](#) and [French](#). Under the coordination of UNESCO and with the support of Juventus Football Club, the Report is the result of research and surveys involving an international team of experts, researchers, football managers and officials. It presents measures to fight racism and discrimination in international football takes stock of what has been done and is being done against racism and discrimination in sport.
- Just published, the publication *World Heritage in Europe Today* brings together the experience, challenges and success stories of the thousands of people who are directly involved with World Heritage in Europe—a region which accounts for close to half of the World Heritage List. This book shows how the requirements concerning the safeguarding and management of World Heritage sites are managed today to ensure that the common heritage of humanity can be passed on to future generations. You can purchase this publication in English on the following website: http://publishing.unesco.org/details.aspx?=&Code_Livre=5134&change=E
- Released for the International Mother Language Day, the new policy paper by UNESCO's Global Education Monitoring Report (GEM) titled "*If you don't understand, how can you learn?*" argues that being taught in a language other than their own can negatively impact children's learning. It shows the importance of teacher training and inclusive supporting materials to improve the learning experience of these children, and provide them. This policy paper is available online in English only under [this link](#).

Appointments of Presidents and Secretaries-General of National Commissions (January/February 2016)

I am pleased to welcome to the National Commissions network the following new members:

In New Zealand, Ms Vicki Soanes has been appointed Acting Secretary-General, succeeding Ms Elizabeth Rose.

In the Republic of Korea, Mr Lee Joon Sik has been appointed Chairperson, succeeding Mr Woo-yea Hwang.

Yours sincerely,



Eric Falt