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منظمة الأمم المتحدة  
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联合国教育、  
科学及文化组织

## The President of the General Conference

### To all Permanent Delegates to UNESCO

Ref.: GBS/SCG/2021/025

22 February 2021

Dear Colleagues,

1. As you will recall, the General Conference examined, at its 40th session, three proposed amendments to the Constitution of UNESCO. One of them, addressed to Article V, was adopted by the Conference ([40 C/Resolution 83](#)) After lengthy debates, the General Conference decided to adjourn the examination of the items related to the two other proposed amendments (addressed, respectively, to Article V and Article VI of the Constitution) to its 41st session.

2. During these debates, it was frequently mentioned that further dialogue on both items was required prior to their examination by the General Conference in November 2021 and that the Working Group on Governance, given its inclusive, open-ended nature, would be the appropriate forum for such a dialogue among all Member States wishing to participate to this highly important result-seeking conversation. We may or we may not arrive at an emergent consensus. However, what is important in this exercise is to fulfil the necessary steps that will allow everyone to claim that a serious, in-depth discussion took place in consonance with the importance of the issue at hand.

3. In this connection, I convened a meeting of the Working Group on 20 July 2020. This meeting was devoted to a free, open discussion of the outstanding draft amendments. The debate showed that the interested parties were then far from agreeing on a text. I saw clearly that these issues still required informed exchange and fine-tuning before the 41st session of the General Conference.

4. Therefore, in closing the meeting, I invited the Member States to meet me individually or in groups, so that we can deepen the dialogue and look for ways that would allow us to advance together. It is thus that, between 15 September and 6 October 2020, I had the pleasure to discuss – mainly individually and with two small groups – with the Permanent Delegates of more than fifty Member States.

5. Following these marathon meetings, I presented my findings with my letter of 12 October 2020. This letter along with my invitation letter of 8 September 2020 remain among the fundamental sources of the ongoing debate, and I think that they merit a studious and careful review by the Member States.

6. You would also remember that in my address to the 210th session of the Executive Board, I lamented the fact that the conditions of pandemic prevented us from delving in earnest to the substance and different aspects of the question of term-limitation.

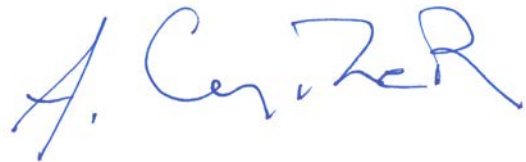
7. In the meantime, as I pointed out in my letter of 15 February 2021, I was able to observe that different parties to the question of term-limitation now have a much less dismissive view of each other's positions. I found this encouraging as it showed that there is room for further meaningful discussions to take place and I proposed certain dates.

8. I understand that the Delegations would rather prefer to leave behind the 211th session of the Executive Board before entering into serious discussions on the proposed amendments. Indeed, this will give time enough for discussions both among the parties and also with each other. The associated work load emanating from the oncoming session of the Executive Board would have been then left behind as well.

9. I therefore invite you to participate at the next meeting of the Working Group on governance on **Thursday, 22 April 2021**. This is a date that allows us a big enough room, if necessary for the whole day. I will inform the Member States of the exact time and number of the room in due course.

10. At this time, the meeting is foreseen to take place *in presentia*, in full respect of the relevant sanitary measures, and, of course, if the sanitary conditions would allow by that time. Should the evolving sanitary situation so impose, the meeting will be conducted virtually. The Secretariat will address all necessary technical arrangements and will supply us with relevant details as to the time and venue of the meeting.

Please accept, dear Colleagues, the assurances of my highest consideration.



Altay Cengizer