

Hundred and sixty-seventh Session

167 EX/52
PARIS, 9 September 2003
Original: English

Item 3.3.3 of the provisional agenda

**PROPOSAL FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A REGIONAL CENTRE
FOR EDUCATIONAL PLANNING IN THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES
UNDER THE AUSPICES OF UNESCO**

SUMMARY

In accordance with 164 EX/Decision 3.2.1, the Director-General submits a report on the establishment of a Regional Centre for Educational Planning in the United Arab Emirates under the auspices of UNESCO, for consideration and onward transmission to the 32nd session of the General Conference. A corresponding draft agreement is presented in the Annex.

Decision proposed: paragraph 14.

1. The discussion on the need for modern educational planning capacity in the United Arab Emirates and possible ways to build such capacity with support from the UNESCO International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP) began at the initiative of the UAE in early 2000. The Director of IIEP carried out a mission to the UAE in June 2000 in order to explore the possibilities of cooperation in training in educational planning, management and evaluation.
2. During the visit of the Director-General to the UAE in March 2001, His Highness Sheikh Sultan Bin Mohammed Al Qassimi, Ruler of Sharjah, offered a building in Sharjah Cultural City to house a regional centre for educational planning.
3. In June 2001, a joint mission of IIEP and the Ministry of Education and Youth (MoEY) began fact-finding work to explore the need for training in educational planning and management in the UAE and appropriate ways of meeting such needs, for example in the form of a training centre, with possible regional coverage.

4. At the 162nd session of the Executive Board in October 2001, the Director-General informed the Board about the request from the United Arab Emirates for the establishment, with support from UNESCO, of a Regional Centre for Educational Planning and of the work being carried out to explore the feasibility of such a centre.

5. In January 2002, an IIEP mission to the UAE, together with a MoEY team, completed the feasibility study in accordance with the established principles and guidelines (21 C/Resolution 40). It took a critical look at the need for the proposed centre and at its objectives, possible training programme and activities, proposed modes of operation, legal status, structure, staffing, location, costs and financing.

6. The Director-General submitted to the Executive Board at its 164th session in April 2002 a report on the feasibility of the establishment of a regional centre for educational planning under the auspices of UNESCO (164 EX/6 of 16 April 2002 and 164 EX/6 Corr.). The report concludes that a regional centre is needed, justified and, under certain conditions, feasible, and that UNESCO support for such a centre is possible. The Board discussed the report and invited the Director General "... to pursue these discussions [with the United Arab Emirates] and to present to it at its 166th session and to the General Conference at its 32nd session a report on the establishment of the centre under the auspices of UNESCO" (164 EX/Decision 3.2.1).

7. Such discussions were indeed pursued, in particular through correspondence with the Minister of Education and Youth and a UNESCO-UAE meeting held at IIEP in Paris in August 2002. A corresponding report by the Director-General was prepared for submission to the 166th session of the Board (April 2003). However, due to persisting divergence of views, in particular with regard to the category in which the future Centre would be placed, the Director-General was not in a position to submit a conclusive report at that session and the item, in agreement with the national authorities, had to be withdrawn from its agenda.

8. Notwithstanding the above, efforts continued in order to find a satisfactory solution. The Director-General requested the Deputy Director-General to undertake all necessary consultations to that effect. Having studied the different options available, the Deputy Director-General carried out a mission to the United Arab Emirates at the end of August 2003.

9. During this mission, a meeting with the Minister of Education and Youth in Dubai provided an opportunity to make a number of important clarifications. It was highlighted in particular that while the two categories of institutes presented a number of legal, organizational, administrative and functional differences, both were part of the UNESCO network, contributing to the Organization's strategic objectives and involved in the implementation of its priority programmes, as foreseen under the overall strategy with regard to UNESCO institutes and centres (documents 165 EX/20 and 167 EX/16).

10. The Minister found this clarification satisfactory and, on his part, confirmed the commitment of the UAE Government to fully fund the future Centre including its premises, equipment and staff.

11. In response to a specific preoccupation of the Minister regarding the kind of certificates that the future Centre could issue, it was agreed that the Centre could be authorized to issue certificates in UNESCO's name, with the certificate form and content to be mutually agreed, once the quality of the courses delivered by the Centre has been duly assessed and approved by UNESCO.

12. This understanding clearing the last outstanding point, both parties agreed that the proposal, already considered by the Executive Board at its 164th session, could now be resubmitted to the governing bodies for approval.

13. A detailed report on the feasibility of the proposal can be found in document 164 EX/6. The full text of the feasibility study is also available for consultation.

14. Taking into account that the principles and guidelines regarding the establishment of international and regional centres under the auspices of UNESCO have thus been met, the Executive Board may wish to consider the following decision:

The Executive Board,

1. Recalling documents 164 EX/6 and 164 EX/6 Corr. and 164 EX/Decision 3.2.1,
2. Having examined document 167 EX/52, containing a final report by the Director-General on the proposed establishment of the Regional Educational Planning Centre in the United Arab Emirates under the auspices of UNESCO,
3. Notes with satisfaction the successful conclusion of discussions between the Director-General and the national authorities of the United Arab Emirates, allowing completion of all the steps required before approval by the governing bodies;
4. Endorses the proposal, which now fully satisfies the established criteria and procedures and is in line with the overall strategy for category 2 institutes and centres as presented in documents 165 EX/20 and 167 EX/16;
5. Recommends that the General Conference, at its 32nd session, approve the establishment of the said Centre under the auspices of UNESCO (category 2) and invites the Director-General to sign the corresponding agreement between UNESCO and the Government of the United Arab Emirates contained in the Annex to document 167 EX/52.

ANNEX

Draft Agreement
between the Government of the United Arab Emirates (UAE)
and
the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)
on the Establishment and Operation of
the Regional Educational Planning Centre in the UAE

Whereas the General Conference, at its 32nd session, decided that a Regional Educational Planning Centre would be established in the United Arab Emirates as a centre under the auspices of UNESCO (category 2),

Whereas the Government of the United Arab Emirates has contributed and stands ready to contribute further to the establishment and to ensure the operation of the Centre in its territory,

Bearing in mind that the Government of the United Arab Emirates has already taken a number of effective measures and steps to ensure the necessary infrastructure and facilities for the Centre, by constructing and equipping the necessary premises,

Desirous of concluding an agreement with a view to ensuring the establishment and operation of the said Centre and to defining the terms and conditions governing the support that it shall be granted, under the guidelines laid down by the General Conference (21 C/Resolution 40) for regional centres set up by a State with UNESCO's participation,

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, hereinafter called "the Organization", and the Government of the United Arab Emirates, hereinafter called "the Government",

HAVE AGREED AS FOLLOWS:

Article I **Establishment**

The Government agrees to take any measures that may be required for the setting up and the operation of the Regional Educational Planning Centre in the UAE, hereinafter called "the Centre", as provided for under this Agreement.

Article II **Legal Status**

The Centre shall be an autonomous institution with the legal status of a non-profit educational institution within the legal context of the host country, the UAE. In order to reflect its formal association with the Organization, the name of the Centre shall be "Regional Educational Planning Centre under the Auspices of UNESCO (REPC)".

Article III **Participation**

1. The Centre shall be at the service of the States members of the Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) and possibly other States that, by their geographical proximity to the Centre and/or the nature of their educational development and planning needs, desire to cooperate with the Centre.

2. The Centre would welcome cooperation with relevant intergovernmental regional organizations, such as the Arab Bureau of Education for the Gulf States (ABEGS).

Article IV Objectives

1. The objectives of the Centre are:

- (a) To build national and regional capacity for modern educational planning, by targeting senior officials and technical staff of ministries of education, local level (province, district) education offices, and other ministries directly related to the education sector, such as finance ministries, through:
 - (i) training in all aspects of education planning;
 - (ii) training in applied education research, by undertaking fact-finding and analysis work focused on specific needs of the countries of the GCC region; and
 - (iii) awareness-raising with regard to specific sector development issues which are of priority for the countries in the region.
- (b) To facilitate access to information on educational planning and management of other countries and relevant information published by international organizations and institutions, in particular the UNESCO International Institute for Educational Planning, by making relevant material available to the trainees of the Centre in English and Arabic, including translating selected material into Arabic, and by disseminating material on educational planning and management to education authorities in the region.

Article V Organization

1. The structure of the Centre as well as the number and qualification of its professional and support staff is determined by the Centre's objectives set forth in Article IV above. Thus, the Centre will have three programme sections and one support section:

- Section 1: Educational Planning Training Section;
- Section 2: Educational Research Training Section;
- Section 3: Educational Planning and Management Information Section;
- Section 4: Administrative Support Section (including a translation/interpretation unit and a printing and publications unit).

2. The activities of the Centre will be conducted in Arabic and, whenever appropriate, in English.

3. UNESCO will authorize the Centre to issue certificates in UNESCO's name, with the certificate form and content to be mutually agreed, once the quality of the courses delivered by the Centre has been duly assessed and approved by UNESCO. The quality assessment will cover the course content, the profiles of the trainers, the methods of organizing courses and the teaching materials and will be carried out by a UNESCO team and an external evaluator.

Article VI Governing Board

1. The Centre shall be guided and supervised by a Governing Board renewed every four years and composed of:
 - (a) the Minister of Education of the United Arab Emirates or his/her appointed representative;
 - (b) the Ministers of Education of the other GCC countries or their appointed representatives;
 - (c) a representative of the Director-General of UNESCO;
 - (d) the Director of the UNESCO International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP) or his/her representative;
 - (e) the Director of the Centre (who shall have no voting rights).
2. The Minister of Education of the United Arab Emirates or the person designated by the Minister shall be the Chairperson of the Governing Board.
3. The Governing Board shall:
 - (a) approve the long-term and medium-term programmes of the Centre;
 - (b) approve the annual work plan and budget of the Centre, including the staffing table;
 - (c) examine the annual reports submitted by the Director of the Centre;
 - (d) issue the rules and regulations and determine the procedures for the financial, administrative and personnel management of the Centre;
 - (e) decide on the participation of regional intergovernmental organizations and international institutes in the work of the Centre.
4. The Governing Board shall meet in ordinary sessions at regular intervals, at least once every calendar year; it shall meet in extraordinary session if summoned by the Chairperson, either on his/her own initiative or at the request of the UNESCO Director-General or of four of its members.
5. The Governing Board shall adopt its own rules of procedure. For its first meeting the procedure shall be established by the Government and the Organization.

Article VII Personnel

1. The personnel of the Centre shall comprise on a regular basis: professional staff, administrative staff and other support staff.
2. The Centre shall have a core group of professional staff, including the Director, that shall exercise collective leadership in substantive matters, monitoring and guiding the training, research and information dissemination activities of the Centre, in order to ensure consensus on major programme and programme management matters. The core professional staff shall be engaged for

periods of at least three years, and preferably five years or more, in order to ensure the building of solid professional quality and experience and ensure its sustainability.

3. The personnel of the Centre shall comprise on an ad-hoc basis visiting lecturers and visiting research fellows, for limited periods of time and for specific tasks.

4. All personnel that have signed a contract with the Centre shall be under the authority of the Director of the Centre and shall report to him/her.

Article VIII Director

1. The Director of the Centre shall be appointed by the Chairperson of the Governing Board after consultation with each member of the Board. The Director shall discharge the following duties:

- direct the work of the Centre in conformity with the directives and programmes established by the Governing Board;
- propose the work plan, budget and staffing table to the Governing Board;
- appoint the staff of the Centre in agreement with the Minister of Education and, in the case of senior staff, after consultations with the Board;
- organize at regular intervals (at least once every calendar month) and chair meetings of the core group of professional staff in order to ensure consensus on major programme and management matters;
- prepare and submit reports on the activities of the Centre to the Governing Board;
- prepare the provisional agenda for the sessions of the Governing Board and submit to the Board proposals that he/she deems necessary for the administration of the Centre;
- maintain relations with institutes, centres and national and international organizations directly relevant to the work of the Centre;
- submit proposals to the Governing Board that the Director deems necessary for the efficient management of the Centre and which require Board consultation or approval;
- represent the Centre in law and in all civil acts.

2. The Director shall work closely with the core group of professional staff (as defined in Article VI, para. 2).

Article IX Financial Arrangements

1. The Centre's financial resources shall derive from sums allotted by the Government of the United Arab Emirates, from tuition fees and from such contributions as it may receive from other participating countries.

2. The Centre may, with approval of the Governing Board, receive gifts and legacies.

Article X Contribution of the Government

1. The Government shall cover the operating costs of the Centre, including the salaries and compensations of the personnel of the Centre (as defined in Article VII, para. 1 and 3), maintenance and repair, and all goods and services required on a recurrent basis for the proper functioning of the Centre (such as communication, utilities, transport and stationery) in its three programme areas of training in educational planning, access to educational planning and management information, and training in educational research.
2. The Government shall provide the Centre with appropriate space, furniture and equipment.
3. The Government shall cover the expenses of holding the sessions of the Governing Board.

Article XI Contribution of the Organization

1. The Organization shall lend mutually agreed support to the establishment and the operation of the Centre as described in paragraph 2 below.
2. The Organization shall provide technical assistance for the establishment and operation of the Centre, including the preparatory phase, the launching phase and the phase of normal operation.
 - (a) During the preparatory phase, the Organization shall provide support to the Centre for the identification of suitable professional staff, the preparation and testing of course materials, the training of core professional staff, and the selection of material to be translated into Arabic for purposes of educational planning information dissemination in the region.
 - (b) During the launching phase, the Organization shall provide technical assistance for the running-in of the training courses; and expertise to assess the quality and relevance of the training activities of the Centre and to advise on suitable ways to strengthen its performance.
 - (c) During the phase of normal operations of the Centre (i.e. once the launching phase is completed), the Organization shall:
 - (i) provide the Centre with relevant materials published by it;
 - (ii) provide or assist in obtaining technical assistance, for the development of training materials and for participation as resource persons or guest lecturers in training activities;
 - (iii) provide advice on research and training activities of the Centre at the request of its Director;
 - (iv) associate staff of the Centre with relevant UNESCO activities in the region and elsewhere; and
 - (v) provide evaluative advice on the performance of the Centre with a view to assisting it in reaching and/or maintaining high levels of professional performance.

- (d) The Organization shall facilitate access of the Centre to the relevant know-how and the services of its own institutes and Regional Offices, in particular the know-how and the services of the UNESCO International Institute for Educational Planning, the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, the UNESCO Institute for Information Technologies in Education, the UNESCO Institute for Education, the UNESCO Regional Bureau for Education in the Arab States Region (Beirut), and the UNESCO Office in Doha.

Article XII
Final Clauses

1. The present Agreement shall come into force upon its signature by the two parties. It shall remain in force until the end of the year 2007 and may be renewed for similar successive periods as agreed upon between the Government and the Organization.
2. The present Agreement may be revised by consent between the Government and the Organization.
3. Either party shall have the right to terminate this Agreement by giving six months' prior written notice to the other party. Such termination shall mean that the Centre shall cease to be officially associated with the Organization as a centre under the auspices of UNESCO.

IN FAITH WHEREOF, the undersigned representatives, duly authorized, have signed the present Agreement in two copies in Arabic and English.

For the Government of the
United Arab Emirates:

For the United Nations Educational,
Scientific and Cultural Organization:

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.....

(representative of the Government)

(representative of the Organization)

Hundred and sixty-seventh Session

167 EX/52 Corr.
PARIS, 10 September 2003
English and French only

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CORRIGENDUM

Paragraph 1(b) of Article VI on page 3 of the Annex should read as follows:

- (b) three Ministers of Education from participating GCC countries or their appointed representatives, at the invitation of the Minister of Education of the host country,