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Organisation
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pour l'éducation,
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Organización
de las Naciones Unidas
para la Educación,
la Ciencia y la Cultura

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منظمة الأمم المتحدة
للتربيـة والعلم والثقافة

联合国教育、
科学及文化组织

Address by Mr Koïchiro Matsuura,
Director-General of UNESCO,
on the occasion
of the Information meeting of the Executive Board

UNESCO, 18 July 2008

Mr Chairman of the Executive Board,
Mr President of the General Conference,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I should like to begin by extending a warm welcome to you all, and my special thanks to you, Mr Chairman, for your opening remarks. I know that under your stewardship we can look forward to a very frank and productive exchange.

I wish to extend, on behalf of UNESCO and in my own name, a very happy birthday to Nelson Mandela, who is celebrating his 90th birthday today. Let me remind you that Nelson Mandela is UNESCO's Goodwill Ambassador in charge of human rights, a role of particular importance this year as we commemorate the 60th anniversary of the Declaration of Human Rights.

Following the pattern we have established for these meetings, I shall make my statement in two parts. The first will focus on programme-related questions, the second on those regarding UN reform and management. I will do my best to respond to all of the 60 questions posed, so please bear with me, as it will require some time to do justice to the important matters you have raised.

Turning, therefore, to our programmatic action, let me begin with education.

I am pleased that so many of your questions concentrate on UNESCO's top priority: achieving Education for All (EFA).

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With respect to our global coordination role, UNESCO has been pushing hard for all stakeholders to fulfil the commitments they made in Dakar in 2000. In particular, in the run up to the G8 Summit in Hokkaido, I have been making a concerted appeal for donors to honour their funding pledges. At a forum on official development assistance (ODA) organized during the recent ECOSOC high-level segment in New York, I stated that aid to basic education was not rising nearly fast enough to achieve the EFA goals on target. I called on donors to urgently scale up their assistance, especially to Africa. The Assistant Director-General for Education has also been arguing this point in the context of the UN Secretary-General's MDG Africa initiative.

It is therefore encouraging to see that G8 leaders have restated their determination to meet past promises. More importantly, they have recognized the need for aid – in particular aid to Africa – to increase beyond current commitments, although it is disappointing that the G8 did not make explicit quantitative pledges for education. As I have been arguing for some time, on the basis of past pledges aid to basic education will still only reach at most US$6 billion annually by 2010. This is still US$5 billion short of what we estimate is needed to achieve Education for All.

In this context, I would like to inform you that on 17 September I shall be organizing an information meeting on global trends in ODA, with the participation of the chair of OECD/DAC. This will be an occasion both to assess where donors stand in meeting their commitments, in particular to basic education, and to analyze progress towards greater aid effectiveness, in line with the Paris Declaration.

With respect to the outcomes of the Hokkaido G8, it is also pleasing to note the holistic approach to education, in particular the emphasis on quality and teacher training, and the direct reference to UNESCO's role in promoting education for sustainable development (ESD). However, UNESCO would have liked more explicit pledges in support of adult literacy and early childhood care and education. We shall continue to advocate strongly for this.

Another focus of UNESCO's global coordination efforts is to mobilize more coherent support for those countries with the greatest EFA needs, especially in Africa. In this regard, I would like to draw your attention to UNESCO's proactive engagement in the Fourth Tokyo International Conference for African Development (TICAD IV), held in Yokohama in late May. I attended the Conference personally, chairing a special MDG breakout session on education. UNESCO's advocacy for

investment in quality at all levels of the education system was taken up in the TICAD IV outcome documents, helping to influence the positive results of the G8.

Mr Chairman,

The status of preparations for the 8th meeting of the EFA High-Level Group in Oslo, in mid-December, has raised a number of questions.

I can tell you that plans are advancing well. Invitations to the Oslo meeting have already been sent. The selection of participants is based on three criteria: multi-stakeholder representation; relevance to the themes under discussion; and geographical balance. I would ask for the help of Board members in following up these invitations. If we are to build on the renewed momentum of last year's meeting, and secure real commitments, we must have top-level participation from all stakeholders.

UNESCO has been working closely with the International Advisory Panel (IAP) on the draft agenda, which we intend to circulate in September. As in the past, the High-Level Group's deliberations will be informed by the EFA Global Monitoring Report. The next Report will be officially launched during the International Conference on Education (ICE) in Geneva on 24 November. Its theme, "Overcoming inequality: why governance matters", ties in closely with the ICE's focus on inclusive education, which, as we know, is vital to achieving EFA.

As was the case last year, an advance copy of the GMR will be made available to the EFA Working Group ahead of its meeting in mid-November. This will enable the Working Group to distil the Report's findings into clear policy recommendations for the High-Level Group.

Already, UNESCO is working with the IAP to identify targets in key areas such as quality and teacher training, for which stakeholders can be held to account. This is the first time that the High-Level Group meets in a donor country, and we are particularly concerned to use this to achieve firm commitments on financing.

As you can see, the IAP is helping to ensure more strategic planning and follow-up within the High-Level Group process. It is also building greater ownership, especially among multilateral agencies.

All 5 Dakar convening agencies are members of the Panel. This regular interaction is helping to reinforce multilateral cooperation internationally. However, I agree that more needs to be done to translate this into greater coherence at the country level, in line with the EFA Global Action Plan (GAP) and UN efforts to deliver as one.

In this regard, UNESCO is convening a special meeting of the Dakar 5 to discuss how we can accelerate progress, working through existing mechanisms such as UN joint programming processes and the EFA Fast Track Initiative. We will be particularly interested to examine how the UNESCO National Education Support Strategy (UNESS) can facilitate joint efforts at greater harmonization and alignment, especially in those countries with the greatest EFA needs. The meeting will take place either on the margins of the next IAP session, in mid-September in Paris, or around the MDG High-Level event, which is to be held on the 25th at the UN General Assembly in New York.

I have been invited to act as rapporteur for the roundtable on education at the MDG High-Level event. In the build up to the Oslo meeting, this will be an important occasion to advocate for a comprehensive approach to education that encompasses not just the two education-related MDGs but all six EFA goals.

As you know, UNESCO has been working hard to galvanize action to meet the youth and adult literacy goal, which of all the EFA goals has been the most neglected. The series of international meetings we have been leading in support of global literacy will be drawing to a close this September. The final regional conference, for Latin America and the Caribbean, will take place in Mexico early in September. This will be followed by a wrap-up event hosted by Mrs Laura Bush, Honorary Ambassador for the UN Literacy Decade (UNLD), in New York on the 22nd. The White House symposium will be an occasion both to assess the outcomes of the regional UNESCO meetings, and – most importantly – to identify the next steps ahead. As part of our mid-term report to the General Assembly on the UNLD, UNESCO will present a strategy aimed at accelerating international efforts to eradicate illiteracy, building on the recommendations of the regional meetings.

One final point I would like to make with respect to EFA concerns the need to broaden the EFA agenda to include post-primary learning opportunities and the world of work. The recent biennial meeting of the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA), which I attended in Maputo in early May, identified

this as the major emerging challenge for African countries. UNESCO will carry this issue forward to the High-Level Group, highlighting the need for an evolving and needs driven approach to basic education, which comprises the lower secondary level and gives attention to knowledge and skills for life, work and citizenship.

I shall present to the Board a report on UNESCO's action in EFA, where you can find more information on the points I have mentioned here. I shall also submit a draft outline of the new strategy that UNESCO is developing on Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), which is one example of how we are expanding our support beyond the basic level in response to Member States' demands. Ambassador Overfeld of Germany has offered to call a co-sponsors meeting on 5 September, which would help the Secretariat gain a better understanding of Member States' needs and priorities in this area. We intend to submit the final version of the strategy to the 181st session of the Board.

Mr Chairman,

A question has been asked with respect to capacity for managing the four world education conferences that UNESCO will organize over the coming twelve months. I agree that it is a heavy workload, but each event is of major strategic significance.

I have already mentioned the ICE, and the importance of inclusive education to achieving EFA. The other conferences to be held in 2009 are: the mid-term review conference for the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development, to be held in Bonn, Germany, in late March; CONFINTEA VI, which will be held in Belém, Brazil, in late May; and the Second World Conference on Higher Education, to be convened here at Headquarters in early July. Each conference, in its own field, will be an occasion to take stock of progress, identify emerging new challenges, and exchange good policies and practices upon which we can build. The global conferences will also be preceded by regional meetings to gain a finer understanding of specific country needs and priorities, and ensure focused and action-oriented outcomes.

Given the significance of these conferences, all relevant education divisions and institutes have been mobilized, as have other sectors concerned. The Deputy Assistant Director-General for Education Programme Management, Ana Luiza Machado is assuring overall coordination, under the leadership of Nicholas Burnett.

We are working very actively to ensure synergies across the Conferences, and also to make sure there is follow-up through the next C/5.

UNESCO is also drawing on the support of other partners and experts. This includes the United Nations University (UNU), which is involved in preparing for these major education events, as well as for the Second World Forum on Science, to be held in Budapest in November 2009. The UNU Rector, Konrad Osterwalder, is himself a member of the Planning Committee for the World Conference on Higher Education. In response to the question posed by Morocco, this is a good example of how UNESCO is reinforcing its cooperation with the UNU.

Before closing on the subject of World Conferences, let me express my thanks to all those Member States who are providing support. However, UNESCO is still seeking extrabugetary funds, in particular for the World Conference on Higher Education and its preparatory meetings, but also to fill the remaining financing gap for the ICE. I therefore strongly hope that more countries will be encouraged to lend their support.

An information meeting has already been held for the ICE. If necessary, similar meetings will also be held for the other conferences.

Finally, let me say a few words about the South-South Cooperation Fund. I fully share the conviction of those who see greater collaboration among countries of the South as crucial to international development. Our support to the E-9 initiative is an example of the importance we attach to this. I am therefore eager to see resources under the Fund used effectively. We have worked closely with the G77 and China to develop the Terms of Reference for the Fund's management. When these are finalized, activities will be selected for funding, in line with UNESCO's priorities.

Mr Chairman,

Let me now turn to the sciences, staring with the follow-up to the overall review of major programmes II and III.

You have asked how this is progressing. The recommendations adopted by the General Conference are gradually being implemented, and I am pleased to report that significant results have already been achieved.

For example, the Natural Sciences Sector has reinforced its support to Member States in the review of national science, technology and innovation policies, an area where UNESCO has longstanding expertise. We are giving special focus to Africa, with reviews currently being undertaken in 14 countries in the region.

Earlier this month, during the ECOSOC High-Level Segment, I organized a ministerial roundtable breakfast meeting to discuss how we could better harness scientific knowledge for sustainable development through effective policies. It aroused considerable interest, and many interesting proposals for action were made, which UNESCO will actively follow up.

Interdisciplinary and intersectoral activity is also being strengthened. The ADGs of SC, IOC and SHS lead four of the platforms, on Science Education, Climate Change, Small Islands and National Research Systems.

One example of successful intersectoral work is in the field of science ethics. In response to the question of how UNESCO is bringing together its expertise in ethics and the natural sciences, let me mention the effective collaboration between the two sectors in addressing subjects such as biotechnology, nanoscience, and new developments in the life sciences. In this regard, I should highlight the important roles played by the World Commission on the Ethics of Scientific Knowledge and Technology (COMEST) and the International Bioethics Committee of UNESCO (IBC).

In addition, International and Intergovernmental scientific programmes are now cooperating in a more coherent way. For example: MAB and IOC now coordinate coastal and marine activities; and MOST and MAB work on outreach to youth and women in African biosphere reserves.

We are also improving outreach through new partnerships, as for instance, with the BBC, to disseminate science programmes in least developed countries, as well as through international years, such as the International Year of Planet Earth.

Following the global launch of the Year at UNESCO Headquarters in February, regional launches were held for Latin America and the Caribbean in Brasilia in April and for Africa in Arusha in May. I had the great pleasure to attend the latter event personally, together with President Kikwete of the United Republic of Tanzania, and Chair of the African Union.

Responding to your question on UNESCO's Strategy for Action on Climate Change, it has been revised to take into account discussions at the last Board, as well as on-going efforts to promote a UN system-wide approach to the issue.

I am pleased to inform you that the CEB has accepted UNESCO's position to create a new working group, under the joint leadership of UNESCO and WMO, in the cross-cutting areas of science, assessment, monitoring and early warning, which will coordinate system-wide action in those areas for the UN system. Their work will then serve as a basis for proposals to be made by the UN Secretary-General to the 2009 Poznan meeting of the State Parties to the UNFCCC.

Under the intersectoral platform on Climate Change, which is charged with coordinating the implementation of UNESCO's strategy, efforts have been made to identify high-impact intersectoral projects for extrabudgetary funding and to increase UNESCO's visibility and participation in international action to address climate change. These will be presented in a detailed plan of action at the 2009 spring session of the Executive Board.

In response to Member States' requests, the strategy gives special focus to Africa and Small Island Developing States. Another key area of concern is the effects of climate change on indigenous peoples, who often find themselves excluded from debates on the subject. In collaboration with Professor Malaurie, UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador for polar issues, and with the support of H.S.H. Prince Albert II of Monaco, UNESCO will organize a meeting of international experts in Monaco in Spring 2009 on the transformations of Arctic land and seascapes due to climate change and their implications for sustainable development.

IOC plays a key role in the area of climate change. I am pleased to note that IOC's Executive Council, which met from 24 June-1 July 2008, endorsed the conclusion of the Working Group on the Future of IOC that the future of IOC should unquestionably remain, and be reinforced, within UNESCO. This is something I feel very strongly about, as do you, the Member States, who at last year's General Conference expressed unanimous support for IOC and decided to increase its resources for the 2008-2009 biennium by US$500,000. I have already allocated this extra funding and will soon identify its sources.

In the area of freshwater, the preparations for the third edition of the World Water Development Report are well under way. The Report's theme is "Water in a

Changing World" and it will establish the links between water and climate change, the global food crisis, energy, demographics, economic development and changes in land use patterns.

The preparatory process has been inclusive, with the participation of hundreds of scientists, professionals and decision makers in a variety of consultations, which included, for the first time, an open online consultation with the broader public.

I will have the honour to launch the Report, on behalf of the UN system, on the first day of the 5th World Water Forum, on 16 March 2009 in Istanbul. This will ensure that the Report receives good visibility, and is used as a reference throughout the Forum.

With regard to the question on the global rise in food prices, let me remind you that FAO is the principal agency responsible for food security. Nevertheless, UNESCO is providing some support through scientific initiatives such as the recently-completed International Assessment on Agricultural Science and Technology for Development (IAASTD). The report considers such major issues as biofuels, GM crops, use of traditional know-how, and the impact of climate change, and underlines the pressing need to change the rules of modern agriculture.

Mr Chairman,

In the human and social sciences, I know that UNESCO's action to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is of great interest to Member States.

The celebration of World Press Freedom Day 2008 took place on 3rd May in Maputo, Mozambique, with major activities organized by UNESCO and numerous other events around the world. The richness of the deliberations is reflected in the "Maputo Declaration: Fostering Freedom of Expression, Access to Information and Empowerment of People". On this occasion, I also had the pleasure of handing over the 2008 UNESCO/Guillermo Cano World Press Freedom prize to the Mexican reporter Lydia Cacho Ribeiro, in the presence of the President of Mozambique, Mr Armando Guebuza.

Preparations are well advanced for the high-level symposium on freedom of expression, including an exhibition on the safety of journalists and press freedom, planned for the 29th of October at UNESCO Headquarters. UNESCO is also

involved in organizing the regional conference on the Contribution of the Media and Education to the Promotion of a Culture of Human Rights, which will be hosted by the Government of Colombia in Cartagena, in early September.

In response to the specific request of Member States, the UN Inter-Agency Coordinating Committee on Human Rights Education in the School System (UNIACC) – of which UNESCO is an active member – will organize a side-event on human rights education at the forthcoming International Conference on Education. The ICE will be an important occasion to reaffirm education as a basic human right – and, in response to Mexico's question, a meeting is scheduled to be held during the conference by the UNESCO/ECOSOC Joint Expert Group on the Monitoring of the Right to Education.

The visibility of UNESCO's action on human rights will receive a boost when we host from 3 to 5 September the 61st annual UN Department of Public Information/NGO conference. We are fully involved in the preparation of this major event, and I will participate in the opening session.

We also foresee various events at Headquarters in December, including the award ceremony of the first UNESCO/Bilbao Prize for the Promotion of a Culture of Human Rights. We will also stage an exhibition of UNESCO human rights-related posters from the past sixty years, and another of human rights learning materials demonstrating the diverse ways that Member States are carrying out human rights education in their countries.

I take this opportunity to emphasize again that the implementation of many of these activities depends on extrabudgetary resources, and reiterate my appeal to Member States to consider making financial contributions. I count on your full support to ensure the visibility of UNESCO's action in promoting "Dignity and Justice for All of Us".

On a related subject, I must add that UNESCO's role in the fight against doping in sport has become highly visible. As of today, there are 86 States Parties to the Convention from across all five regions. Our cooperation with the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) is also very successful, and allows us to continue focusing on the harmonization of anti-doping rules and policies worldwide, as well as anti-doping education and prevention programmes.

Monsieur le Président,

Dans le domaine de la culture, un certain nombre d'étapes cruciales ont été franchies ces dernières semaines, tout particulièrement dans le domaine normatif. Même si aucune question n'a spécifiquement porté sur elles, quatre réunions importantes au mois de juin et début juillet donnent la mesure de la cohérence et de la complémentarité, mais aussi des enjeux de notre socle normatif.

Du 4 au 6 juin, c'est le Comité pour la protection des biens culturels en cas de conflit armé qui a tenu sa troisième session. Créé au titre du deuxième Protocole de 1999 à la Convention de la Haye de 1954, le Comité a poursuivi son travail d'élaboration de directives qui lui permettront une mise en œuvre opérationnelle de cet important protocole, qui offre un niveau de protection plus important que la Convention de 1954. C'est dire l'importance du travail engagé par le Comité, dont j'espère que les travaux aboutiront, dans un proche avenir, à l'élaboration d'un ensemble de directives cohérent.

Une autre étape cruciale a été l'Assemblée générale des Etats Parties à la Convention de 2003 pour la sauvegarde du patrimoine culturel immatériel, du 16 au 19 juin dernier. Celle-ci a adopté des directives opérationnelles qui permettent de lancer le coup d'envoi des procédures d'inscription sur les deux listes, la Liste représentative et la Liste de sauvegarde urgente. La prochaine session du Comité, à Istanbul du 4 au 8 novembre prochain, verra quant à elle les 90 chefs d'œuvre du patrimoine immatériel intégrés sur la Liste représentative. Ce sera sans nul doute une autre étape importante et chargée d'émotion pour nous tous. J'espère que les 97 Etats Parties seront nombreux à proposer des candidatures pour les premières inscriptions sur les deux Listes, qui interviendront à l'automne 2009. J'espère aussi que nombreux seront les Etats qui ratifieront rapidement cette Convention, et qui s'engageront dans cette belle aventure de sauvegarde du patrimoine immatériel auquel elle les invite.

Monsieur le Président,

Le mois de juin s'est achevé, en ce qui concerne la culture, par une autre réunion importante, celle du Comité intergouvernemental pour la protection et la promotion de la diversité des expressions culturelles du 24 au 27 juin, précédée par une journée de rencontres entre la société civile et les Parties à la Convention, au nombre de 88 à ce jour. Cette réunion extraordinaire du Comité, lui aussi attelé à

la tâche d'élaboration de ses directives opérationnelles, a permis d'avancer notablement sur des questions clés que constituent la protection et promotion des expressions culturelles dans des situations de menace grave, les partenariats, le rôle de la société civile, ou encore les priorités et modalités d'utilisation des ressources du Fonds. La prochaine réunion du Comité, en décembre prochain, devra examiner les directives finalisées sur ces questions. Je me réjouis que l'esprit constructif qui a prévalu à Ottawa pour la première réunion du Comité se soit prolongé à Paris, et suis confiant que le Comité parviendra dans cet esprit à présenter un ensemble de directives finalisées à la prochaine Assemblée des Parties, en juin 2009, permettant également à cette Convention de livrer toutes ses promesses.

Enfin, les premiers jours de juillet ont été placés sous le signe du patrimoine mondial, avec la réunion du Comité à Québec, dont on fêtait le 400e anniversaire de la naissance. 27 nouveaux biens ont été inscrits, 4 extensions. Aucun nouveau bien n'a été inscrit sur la Liste du patrimoine en danger, mais le mécanisme de suivi renforcé, qui s'appliquait depuis une année à sept biens, a été étendu à quatre autres biens.

Parmi ceux-ci, la Vieille Ville de Jérusalem, et en particulier la rampe d'accès des Maghrébins, a bien entendu fait l'objet d'une attention particulière. C'est donc pour moi source de grande satisfaction que, fidèle à sa tradition, le Comité ait adopté une décision consensuelle à cet égard.

La question du meilleur équilibre géographique de la Liste a également été posée. C'est bien entendu un objectif important et qui doit rester présent à notre esprit. Il doit être conjugué avec un autre impératif majeur, celui de la crédibilité de la Liste. Nous pouvons cependant de toute évidence faire des progrès, en particulier à travers un accompagnement plus actif dans l'élaboration des dossiers de candidatures des pays qui manquent de capacités pour ce faire. Cet accompagnement ne sera néanmoins pas gage de succès d'inscription, qui reste de l'exclusive prérogative du Comité. Il demande par ailleurs des moyens humains et financiers importants, dont manque le Centre du patrimoine mondial actuellement.

La décision du Comité de ne pas considérer favorablement mes propositions de financement de sept nouveaux postes sur des fonds mixtes faisant en partie appel au Fonds du patrimoine mondial est à cet égard source de grande déception et

d'inquiétude pour moi. Je ne pense pas que je serai en mesure, dans ces conditions, de poursuivre au même niveau l'ambitieux programme de travail du Centre, et je vais probablement être amené à prendre des décisions douloureuses pour nous tous, ce que je regrette très sincèrement. Je comprends d'autant moins cette décision que les membres de ce Conseil, dont certains sont également membres du Comité du patrimoine mondial, m'avaient donné lors de la session d'avril le sentiment de comprendre cette nécessité et d'être prêts à considérer sérieusement cette possibilité. Je ferai bien sûr tout mon possible pour opérer en interne les réaménagements nécessaires, mais il faut être conscient que la décision du Comité aura des conséquences très négatives sur les opérations futures du Centre. Je me vois donc contraint, Monsieur le Président, de retirer ce point de l'agenda de la prochaine session du Conseil, cette fin de non recevoir du Comité signifiant la clôture de ce débat.

Je ne peux que le regretter profondément, n'ayant aucune marge de manœuvre au Secteur de la culture, comme vous le savez, dans un contexte où les nombreuses autres Conventions que doit administrer le Secteur sont elles aussi sous-équipées en termes de personnel. J'aimerais rappeler à cet égard que la Convention de 2001, avec ses 17 ratifications, est sur le point d'entrer en vigueur, et que nous devrons également faire face à nos responsabilités pour assurer son Secrétariat.

Il ne me reste qu'à espérer que quand nous en viendrons au débat sur le plafond budgétaire, les membres de ce Conseil garderons ce contexte à l'esprit.

Monsieur le Président,

J'en viens à présent aux questions relatives au dialogue entre les cultures et les civilisations, ainsi qu'au dialogue interreligieux.

Depuis la 175e session du Conseil, et comme j'y ai été invité, vous aurez noté que j'intègre systématiquement dans mes rapports statutaires un bilan à cet égard.

La plate-forme intersectorielle sur le dialogue entre les civilisations et les cultures et une culture de paix a activement travaillé à l'élaboration de son plan d'action, et s'est fixée quatre objectifs à atteindre d'ici fin 2009 : l'exploitation des Histoires générales et régionales, le développement des compétences interculturelles, la promotion du dialogue interculturel et interreligieux parmi les jeunes, et le rôle des médias pour le renforcement du dialogue et de la compréhension mutuelle. Je

tiens ici à souligner, en réponse à une question posée par les Philippines, que nous avons pour ce biennium souhaité privilégier dans le domaine du dialogue interreligieux le travail avec les jeunes plutôt qu'une grande Conférence au Siège.

Ce Plan coïncide pour beaucoup avec les priorités de coopération que nous nous sommes fixées avec l'Alliance des civilisations. La Plate-forme a ainsi élaboré et soumis un certain nombre de projets aux autorités espagnoles qui ont mis à disposition des fonds extrabudgétaires dans le cadre de notre accord avec l'Alliance. J'ai d'ailleurs rencontré M. Sampaio il y a quelques jours, afin de passer en revue sa mise en œuvre. Ce dernier s'est déclaré très satisfait de l'actif engagement de l'UNESCO. Nous avons d'ores et déjà plusieurs pistes concrètes de coopération.

Bien entendu, notre action en faveur du dialogue ne se limite ni au travail de la plate-forme ni à celui prévu au titre de la coopération avec l'Alliance. Mon rapport périodique dans le cadre du EX/4 vous donnera des informations détaillées à cet égard. Je pense en particulier aux rencontres périodiques des chefs d'Etat de l'Europe du Sud-Est organisées depuis 2002, dont la dernière s'est tenue à Athènes les 13 et 14 juin dernier, qui sont un outil extrêmement utile pour consolider la confiance et la compréhension mutuelle dans la région par le biais de la culture. Cette année, le Sommet était consacré aux rencontres interculturelles sur les routes maritimes, fluviales et lacustres.

Une réunion d'information sera organisée à l'automne pour brosser un tableau plus complet de nos activités en matière de dialogue interculturel.

Monsieur le Président,

Un volet important de notre action en cette année 2008 est également l'Année internationale des langues, qui a fait l'objet de plusieurs questions.

Cette année internationale est principalement une occasion de communication et de mobilisation, et l'UNESCO, en tant qu'agence chef de file, anime depuis octobre 2007 une campagne de sensibilisation sous le slogan : « les langues, ça compte ! ». Son objectif principal est de souligner combien les langues sont un facteur stratégique de développement durable.

A ce jour, plus de 170 projets ont été mis en place à l'échelle mondiale, et de nouveaux projets sont lancés chaque jour par de nombreux acteurs. Le détail de

ces initiatives est mis à jour en temps réel sur notre site Internet. Les activités à l'échelle globale, régionale, nationale et locale sont développées principalement dans le domaine de l'éducation multilingue et des langues en danger, mais elles concernent aussi le dialogue interculturel, le cyberspace, les savoirs autochtones et les transformations sociales, qui intègrent en particulier la question des migrations.

Je citerai dans ce contexte une réunion à Tokyo fin août à laquelle le Président Yaï sera personnellement invité en tant que linguiste, organisée en coopération avec l'Université des Nations Unies dans le cadre d'une série annuelle de rencontres sur la mondialisation, et qui aura pour thème cette année « La mondialisation et les langues ».

Bien entendu, l'UNESCO met en œuvre elle-même un certain nombre d'initiatives prévues dans le programme et budget, coordonnées à travers la Plate-forme intersectorielle sur les langues et le multilinguisme.

Pour ce qui est en particulier du renforcement des capacités institutionnelles pour la sauvegarde des langues, qui a fait l'objet d'une question spécifique, la Section du patrimoine immatériel a mis en œuvre, en coopération étroite avec l'Académie africaine des langues (ACALAN) et les bureaux de l'UNESCO à Bamako et Addis-Abéba, un important projet visant au renforcement des capacités pour la sauvegarde des langues africaines et des traditions et expressions orales en Afrique sub-saharienne au cours de la période 2005-2007. Une évaluation de l'impact de ce projet devrait être réalisée dans les prochains mois.

Par ailleurs, pour ce qui est du langage des signes, évoqué par la Serbie, un certain nombre d'études ont été publiées par ou avec le soutien de l'UNESCO, dont la liste est disponible en ligne à travers notre service d'archives UNESDOC. Plusieurs outils de formation au langage des signes sont aussi mentionnés dans le cadre de la Plate-forme de formation libre développée par le Secteur de la communication.

Enfin, le Secrétariat a effectué tous les préparatifs en vue de la mise en œuvre de la décision 179 EX/10. Vous savez que celle-ci me demande d'organiser une réunion d'experts en vue de contribuer à la réflexion sur l'étude préliminaire concernant un éventuel instrument normatif sur la protection des langues autochtones et des langues menacées d'extinction. Le Venezuela, qui s'était

proposé de financer cette réunion, n'ayant pas réussi à mobiliser les fonds à temps pour permettre la tenue de cette réunion en septembre, nous étudions à présent la possibilité de l'organiser après le Conseil d'automne.

Mr Chairman,

A main focus of UNESCO's action in the field of communication and information continues to be the implementation and follow-up to the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS). In this context, UNESCO is closely cooperating with the International Telecommunication Union (ITU).

As one of the leading facilitator agencies, UNESCO co-organized the third cluster of Action Lines' consultations in Geneva in May. On this occasion, a special session was held to explore ways to make the WSIS implementation, and in particular the consultation meetings, more effective and participatory. There were a number of suggestions on the way forward, and I shall report back to you once the details have been finalized.

Another element to the WSIS follow up is UNESCO's increasing engagement in the subject of Internet governance. For example, through the Ambassador of Latvia's role as chair of ICANN's Governments Advisory Committee, we hosted a meeting on how International Domain Names can promote multilingualism on the Internet.

Let me now turn to your question on the draft strategic plan for the Information for All Programme (IFAP). Further to your request for me to submit the revised strategic plan for consideration at the forthcoming Board session, the Bureau of the IFAP Council proceeded with a consultation of IFAP stakeholders and partners. The revised strategic plan is now ready and will be presented with my comments and observations in document 180 EX/15.

Overall, I feel that the proposed strategic plan corresponds to UNESCO's medium-term strategy. The proposal to focus on the implementation of information policies as a means of building national capacities is sound.

Unfortunately, it is clear that the current human and financial resources are not sufficient for the programme to implement the ambitious plan adopted by the IFAP Council. As such, the programme's success will depend on its ability to mobilize extra-budgetary resources, through the more effective engagement of IFAP Bureau

and Council members, as well as IFAP National Committees. I should note in this connection that mobilizing and managing a fund raising campaign has resource implications for the Secretariat in its own right.

Mr Chairman,

A number of questions were raised on the intersectoral platforms and how they are functioning.

I am pleased to inform you that the work of all 12 intersectoral platforms has begun. The initial phase of reviewing and adapting, as appropriate, the strategies and expected results of the joint activities under each platform has been completed. The indicative budgetary allocations, envisaged in the 34 C/5, have been adhered to. All Sectors have been invited to consider making additional financial commitments to reinforce the impact of this joint action.

It is too early to assess concrete results of this new modality. It would therefore be premature to think about adjusting the number and scope of platforms, as suggested by Sri Lanka. The proper time for such a review, and eventual adaptation, would be next year when the Board considers my proposals for the draft 35 C/5.

I agree that there might be a risk of some substantive overlaps in the current set-up of thematic intersectoral platforms. Nevertheless, I am confident that the lead ADGs will be able to avoid counterproductive duplication, while identifying possibilities for a more efficient overall management and division of labour. The ultimate criterion to judge the success of the platforms will be the quality and impact of their results.

Let me turn to three platforms that are the subject of specific questions.

The Intersectoral Platform for Support to Countries in Post-conflict and Natural Disaster Situations - chaired by the Deputy Director-General - now coordinates UNESCO's field office and sectoral responses to post-crisis situations.

In Iraq, UNESCO has been carrying out projects with some US$ 60 million in extra-budgetary funding support since 2003, with a high implementation rate, as noted in the external evaluation of the Iraq Multi-Donor Trust Fund.

Furthermore, UNESCO was among the first agencies to respond positively to the UN call for increased support for humanitarian and reconstruction efforts in the country, which requires a strengthened in-country presence. We are in the process of establishing a permanent international presence in Baghdad. The post is currently being advertised, and an incumbent is expected to be in place by September. In addition, continued presence will be assured in Erbil, through the rotation on a 2 to 3 month voluntary basis of project officers currently based in Amman.

In Afghanistan, UNESCO's Literacy Initiative for Empowerment (LIFE) has been adopted as the national framework for action for all education stakeholders to collectively plan and implement literacy activities. UNESCO also works to strengthen education television and news production for the national broadcaster, Radio and Television Afghanistan (RTA), through the support of the Government of Italy. Finally, the third phase project for the Safeguarding of the Bamiyan World Heritage site will commence this year, financed by the Japanese Government.

I may add that this year, UNESCO was invited for the first time, upon my request, to participate in ECHA, the Executive Committee for Humanitarian Affairs, chaired by the OCHA Emergency Relief Coordinator, on the subjects of Iraq and Afghanistan.

Concerning the Palestinian Territories, and answering the question raised by Morocco, my visit to the Palestinian Territories this June allowed me to meet bilaterally with President Mahmoud Abbas and with relevant line Ministers to discuss how to strengthen cooperation. Moving forward, we will continue to focus on the following core areas: quality education; support to tangible and intangible heritage; the promotion of cultural industries and cultural tourism; the strengthening of media literacy programmes and audiovisual archives; and gender and youth outreach.

With respect to the occupied Syrian Golan, consultations began in April between the UNESCO Office in Beirut and the Syrian Ministry of Higher Education to identify the procedures and criteria for the selection and award of scholarships for Syrian students in the occupied Golan.

With regard to Lebanon, you will recall that we have been ready to send a high-level UNESCO mission once conditions stabilize. Preparations are now underway,

with the aim to develop a comprehensive programme of assistance. Depending on the conditions, a mission should be undertaken, under Marcio Barbosa's leadership, in early September.

Turning to the Priority Africa Platform, I am pleased to inform you that it began its activities at the beginning of July. This Platform was conceived in the 34 C/4 as a monitoring and coordination mechanism. This means the Platform had to await the completion and fine-tuning of all sectoral workplans before it started work. Based on these, it will now analyse to what extent the expected results in the 34 C/5 are being addressed and budgetary allocations reflect the priority status assigned to Africa.

I would like, however, to make special mention of a recent intersectoral mission to Côte d'Ivoire in early June, led by ADG Africa. More information on the results of the mission will be provided in document 180 EX/43. I wish simply to indicate here that a plan is being developed to cover two phases: a short term set of actions to be implemented before the elections in 2009; and a more ambitious set of projets for the long term for which extrabudgetary funding will be sought. In this specific case, two intersectoral platforms are working in cooperation – that for Africa and that for post-conflict situations.

Let me also report the progress with regard to the Intersectoral Platform on Foresight and Anticipation. Based on the recommendations of the internal working group I set up at the end of last year, the framework for foresight and anticipation activities of the Secretariat has been redesigned. The aim is to better align these activities with UNESCO's strategic programme objectives, to draw more on the capacities and respond to the needs of Sectors, and to maximize outreach, visibility and impact. A document on this new design will be submitted to the next session of the Executive Board.

We will organize an information meeting for Permanent Delegates on all intersectoral platforms in the second half of September to discuss further the progress in their work.

Mr Chairman,

Let me also mention two other fields of an intersectoral nature, although they are not the subject of any specific platform: these are, youth and gender.

Extrabudgetary support allowed UNESCO to organize in June a major conference on youth, which has been identified in the 34 C/4 as a priority group. The multistakeholder meeting, hosted by the Kingdom of Bahrain in Manama, focused on the theme “Youth@the crossroads: a future without violent radicalization”.

The two-day conference ended with agreement on a document, “The Manama Findings”, which sets out a series of lessons and practical approaches in several key areas - foremost among them education and employment - that can be replicated in many countries, also drawing on the power of new media.

UNESCO will follow-up the recommendations by continuing to support the dissemination of information about successful initiatives and projects.

Turning to gender equality, I would like to inform you that the “Priority Gender Equality Action Plan for 2008-2013” is due to be completed in the autumn. It will identify specific actions by sectors with expected results, performance indicators and budgetary allocations. Engaging ADGs in this process from the very beginning underlines the responsibility and accountability assigned to them.

As regards personnel aspects of the stipulations in the 34 C/4 – namely gender parity at D-1 and above by 2015 – they have been articulated in the HRM Plan of Action for Gender Parity, which was submitted to the last session of the Board.

Monsieur le Président,

La dernière question à laquelle je souhaite répondre dans le cadre de cette première partie est celle qui m’a été posée à propos des Tables rondes ministérielles. Celle-ci soulève en réalité deux questions. L’une sur les impacts de ces tables rondes sur nos programmes, et une autre sur l’organisation de ces événements lors de la Conférence générale.

Les tables rondes ministérielles sont conçues non seulement pour offrir une évaluation critique de nos programmes mais surtout pour stimuler un débat auprès des décideurs et, dans certains cas, dégager un consensus politique qui permet de lancer des actions nouvelles. Je citerai à cet égard deux exemples : la table ronde ministérielle sur le patrimoine immatériel organisée à Istanbul en septembre 2002, qui a marqué une étape décisive dans le processus d’élaboration de la Convention de 2003 ; de même que la table ronde des ministres du sport, tenue à Paris en

janvier 2003, qui a proposé d'élaborer une convention internationale contre le dopage dans le sport adoptée en 2005.

Les dernières tables rondes ministérielles organisées pendant la Conférence générale ont porté sur des questions aussi importantes que le rôle de l'éducation ou des sciences pour le développement. J'ajoute que la participation des ministres lors de la dernière Conférence générale était loin d'être négligeable, puisque nous avons accueilli une centaine de ministres de l'éducation et une cinquantaine de ministres chargés des sciences. Mais s'il reste des progrès à faire, c'est pour annoncer ces événements plus à l'avance et pour en assurer un suivi plus attentif. Il faut aussi souligner que les recommandations de ces tables rondes servent de référence dans les discussions intergouvernementales.

Sur la question de leur organisation en marge de la Conférence générale, je me contenterai de souligner, à ce stade, que le groupe de travail du Président de la Conférence générale s'est penché sur cette question a fait plusieurs propositions de nature à améliorer la situation actuelle.

Voilà, Monsieur le Président, ce que je souhaitais apporter comme réponses dans cette première partie. Le nombre de vos questions, et leur portée, m'ont contraint à m'étendre sur de nombreux sujets importants.

Mr Chairman,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

In today's second session of our meeting, I shall focus on the non-programmatic matters you have raised in your written questions, including category 1 and 2 centres.

I shall begin with UN reform. Many of you have expressed a keen interest in the latest developments. Let me inform you of the progress at three levels: intergovernmental, inter-agency and internal to UNESCO.

Regarding the intergovernmental level: you will recall that, having circulated the text of the Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review (TCPR) at the Board's April session, I was invited to prepare a document with an implementation plan for UNESCO for

the next session in October. This work is well under way and I look forward to a debate on the subject in the fall.

Likewise, as you know, consultations on the UN reform process are proceeding at the UN General Assembly.

In late April, I organized a briefing meeting for Permanent Delegations with Ambasadors Kavanagh and Mahiga, who are leading consultations on the follow-up to the report of the Secretary-General's High-level Panel on UN System-wide Coherence, so as to provide a first hand assessment of the state of negotiations. I am closely following developments, which soon may lead to the tabling of a proposal by the two Ambassadors.

Another very important UN General Assembly consultation deals with governance in the area of the environment, and is led by the Ambassadors of Mexico and Switzerland in New York. I had expressed my concern over some aspects of a General Assembly draft resolution being prepared on the subject. In particular, the draft did not reflect the key role played in the area of the environment by the specialized agencies, including UNESCO. The draft resolution is now being re-worked. I am hopeful that an inclusive approach will be adopted on this important topic, as has been the case with regard to "delivering as one", and that the role of the specialized agencies will be clearly recognized.

At the inter-agency level, I am pleased to report that the reform of the UN Chief Executives Board (CEB), in which I played an active role, has now been completed with the integration of the UN Development Group (UNDG) as a third pillar of the overall CEB framework. Under the chairmanship of the Administrator of UNDP, a 13-agency Advisory Group has been set up to provide guidance and backstopping to operational activities of the UN system, especially at the country level. It was a great recognition of UNESCO's commitment that it has been invited to be one of the permanent members of the group.

The policy aspects of UN reform, including the "delivering as one" assessment, is spearheaded by the CEB's High-level Committees on Programmes and on Management. UNESCO is represented in a very active manner in both groups.

Internally, our efforts have intensified to ensure the involvement of UNESCO in as many country programming exercises as possible. This is being aided by my decision to allocate 2% of programme resources for this purpose. Judging from feedback from field offices, this modality has been a great success, especially for ensuring our better coverage and participation in countries where UNESCO is non-resident. These additional investments have already started to bear fruit. For example, in Africa, the Dar-es-Salaam, Nairobi and Maputo offices have been able to secure substantial funds within the One UN common fund, and UNESCO has secured close to 26 million dollars for culture through the Spanish MDG Fund.

I believe that our efforts will receive considerable impetus from the strategic partnership agreement which I intend to sign with UNDP Administrator Derviş in September, and which will outline areas where UNESCO and UNDP can work together, principally at the country level and in the context of UN Country Teams, to advance their agendas and policy interests. Education, in particular EFA, water management, bioethics, culture and development and media will clearly be areas that stand to benefit from such an agreement.

Mr Chairman,

With regard to the question on the harmonization of costs in the context of UN Reform: of the five components of “delivering as one”, it has been generally recognized that the harmonization and integration of common business practices has been the most difficult – as might have been expected, given the differences among UN organizations currently operating in the field.

With respect to the recovery of programme support costs for the implementation of extrabudgetary projects, you will recall that the Board has endorsed the proposal, which is also included in the TCPR resolution adopted by the General Assembly, that “core resources” should not subsidize activities financed by extrabudgetary funding. Progress continues among UN organizations on how this approach can and should be translated into harmonized guidelines. UNESCO is among the lead organizations in this harmonization process.

Let me share with you my views with regard to the potential ploughing back of savings made thanks to increased coherence of UN action. It may be too early to assess the actual savings on the structural, administrative and general support

costs incurred in programme delivery in the “delivering as one” pilots. Indeed, whereas there are some indications of tangible reduction in costs for the country authorities, the actual savings for the UN still remain to be determined.

In reality, at least initially, the costs of doing business for the UN agencies have risen, be it as a result of significant investment of staff time to make “delivering as one” work, both at Headquarters and in the Field, training, or increased involvement in country-level coordination and other backstopping measures. Considerable resources will also need to be channeled into the harmonization of business practices.

Furthermore, the discussions on whether and how the savings in transaction costs could be redeployed would need to take into account the different UN agency operational approaches and programme resource decentralization practices.

The programming methods of the Specialized Agencies imply that while future savings made in the implementation of programme activities could be used to broaden and deepen the scope of the programme, administrative savings should be redeployed to maximize the efficiency of the administration. The real benefit for all agencies involved should first and foremost be measured in terms of transparency and efficiency.

Monsieur le Président,

S’agissant maintenant de la problématique des bureaux communs, même si nous mesurons tout le gain que nous pouvons en tirer sur le plan de l’interaction entre agences, nous continuons à nous engager avec prudence car force est de constater que dans la majorité des cas, cette solution entraîne des coûts considérablement plus élevés qu’auparavant. En effet, alors que de nombreux accords avec les gouvernements nous permettaient de voir des locaux gracieusement mis à notre disposition, nous devons, dans le cadre des bureaux communs, payer, souvent fort cher, notre occupation des locaux.

Concernant l’adaptation des règles financières et comptables, UNESCO s’est engagée, comme l’ensemble du système des Nations Unies, à adopter les nouvelles normes comptables IPSAS en 2010. Toutefois la réutilisation de budgets

rendus disponibles grâce à d'éventuelles économies ne ressort pas de règles comptables mais de reprogrammation.

Le rapport que je présenterai à la 180e session du Conseil exécutif sur la deuxième phase de la revue de la décentralisation portera sur les principes présidant l'adaptation de la structure de notre réseau hors Siège et le soutien programmatique et de gestion qui devra être apporté à l'action de l'UNESCO au niveau des pays. Parmi ces principes figure l'alignement de notre structure, notamment au niveau régional, avec les autres agences des Nations Unies, une meilleure harmonisation avec les efforts d'intégration régionale et sous-régionale ainsi qu'une plus grande flexibilité dans notre réponse aux programmations conjointes lancées au niveau pays.

C'est aussi dans ce contexte que l'Equipe spéciale s'est penchée à deux reprises sur l'adéquation des profils de postes hors Siège avec les besoins des différents niveaux (régionaux, cluster et nationaux). Elle a déjà conclu à la nécessité d'assurer un niveau d'expertise suffisant à notre personnel, et de garantir qu'il dispose des qualités de leadership appropriées lorsque l'UNESCO doit assurer un rôle de coordination interagences au sein des équipes pays des Nations Unies. Sur la base des débats du Conseil exécutif, l'Equipe spéciale poursuivra ses travaux en vue de l'élaboration d'un rapport final qui sera présenté à la 181e session en avril 2009. Ce travail sera réalisé dans le cadre des principes directeurs pour une mise en œuvre rationnelle de la décentralisation approuvés par la Conférence générale en 1999 à sa 30e session.

Le renforcement des capacités des Commissions nationales, dont l'existence constitue pour l'Organisation un avantage comparatif indéniable, et qui avait commencé à être exploré, continuera également à être examiné par l'Equipe spéciale dans cette dernière étape de ses travaux.

A cet égard, les représentants des Philippines et de la Serbie ont tenu à rappeler la nécessité d'une information systématique des délégations permanentes et des commissions nationales sur les activités intéressant leurs pays, en particulier concernant les missions entreprises par les membres du Secrétariat auprès des institutions nationales. Je ne peux qu'abonder dans leur sens et confirmer que le maintien d'une coordination étroite est essentiel.

Puisque j'évoque les voyages, et pour répondre à la question du Mexique, je souhaite vous informer que suite à la publication de ma note bleue, j'ai donné des instructions aux ADG et Directeurs afin que l'allocation totale pour voyages en mission soit réduite de 10 % par rapport aux plans de travail approuvés. De plus, une approche plus proactive a été adoptée afin d'assurer le suivi permanent des budgets alloués en établissant des plafonds budgétaires par Divisions et Bureaux hors Siège. Nous avons par ailleurs fait de grands progrès dans la mise en œuvre des mesures énumérées dans ma note bleue. Le processus d'appel d'offres pour le renouvellement de notre agence de voyages a également été lancé. Nous prévoyant d'y inclure la possibilité d'achat direct pour permettre des options plus flexibles et plus économiques. J'espère que ces mesures participeront efficacement à une réduction des coûts afférents aux voyages et permettront aux membres du personnel de les effectuer dans les meilleures conditions. Les missions restent en effet, je tiens à le souligner, une modalité de mise en œuvre du programme souvent incontournable pour une organisation internationale. Il y a donc des limites aux économies que nous pouvons réaliser dans ce domaine, au risque de mettre sérieusement en danger notre crédibilité, en particulier sur le terrain.

Mr Chairman,

I would like now to address the questions relating to category 1 and 2 centres.

Even though the questions posed were more of an administrative nature, I would like to emphasize again how much I value and appreciate the work of these centers.

Category 1 centers are part and parcel of the Secretariat of UNESCO, and, as such, a key means of programme delivery.

At present, there are a total of 9 category 1 institutes – 6 falling under the purview of the Education Sector, 2 under the Natural Sciences Sector, and one, namely UIS, directly under me. Among them, two institutes – IICBA and IESALC – are located in developing countries. The Paris-based IIEP also maintains a sub-office in Buenos Aires. UNESCO is currently looking into the functioning of IITE, based in Moscow. If I can respond to the question by India, I am definitely prepared to examine seriously proposals for the establishment of further category 1 centres, in particular in the developing world

Each C/5 document contains both an indication of the regular budget allocation, which each institute receives, as well as an indication of available extrabudgetary funds already in hand or pledged in signed donor documents. For the details of these figures, let me refer you to the latest information contained in the 34 C/5.

In this context, I am pleased to inform you that the negotiations for the renewal of the agreements for the UNESCO-IHE Institute for Water Education are in the final stages. The Government of The Netherlands has generously offered to increase the subsidy for the Institute by 1.5 million euros, making the total subsidy 10.6 million euros annually adjusted for inflation, beginning in 2009 and for a period of five years, and to allocate an additional amount of 750,000 euros for the remainder of 2008. I would like to add that the institute is totally supported by extrabugetary funds.

I would like to take this opportunity to call on UNESCO's Member States to contribute financially to UNESCO-IHE. Your contributions are badly needed to address the growing demand for fellowships and enable the Institute to carry out its mandate of providing water professionals for the developing world, and particularly Africa.

As regards category 2 centers, these are developing quite rapidly into a substantial network, in particular in key areas like freshwater and intangible heritage, though their scope and field of intervention is much more diverse. I see them as an important delivery mechanism for UNESCO's actions at the country level in priority areas and a way to increase our visibility in Member States. It is nevertheless very important to have a clear picture of the costs as well as the benefits which they bring to the Organization.

The issue of costs of category 2 centres will be addressed in the comprehensive strategy document on category 2 centres currently being prepared for the next Board session. These costs normally comprise the cost of the feasibility study and annual cost of participation of a representative of the Director-General in the meetings of a governing or executive board. To this would need to be added costs of coordination of activities of category 2 centres by the Sector concerned, which of course I acknowledge are difficult to quantify. I would argue however that the benefits in terms of programme delivery and visibility far outweigh these costs.

Mr Chairman,

To return to UN reform and decentralization, let me respond to the question raised with respect to the evaluation of decentralized bodies.

As scheduled in the 34 C/5 Evaluation Plan, the intention had been to report to the 180th session on UNESCO activities in the eight “delivering as one” pilot countries. However, the exercise has progressed more slowly than initially foreseen. In particular, UNESCO’s evaluation ties in with the evaluation led by the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG), which is taking considerably longer than first envisaged. As a result, the evaluation on UNESCO’s activities on the eight pilots will only be ready for the 181st session of the Board. The Internal Oversight Service (IOS) is accelerating the evaluation, with field visits to pilot countries planned over the coming months under the strategic guidance of a reference group comprising key central services and field offices.

In more general terms, let me turn to the UNESCO Evaluation Plan and Evaluation Strategy, on which another question was raised. The 34 C/5 Evaluation Plan called for the completion of five evaluations in the course of this year alone. As well as the eight pilots, these cover: recruitment policies and practices; the leveraging of scientific knowledge for the benefit of the environment and management of natural resources; support in post-conflict and post disaster situations; and capacity to deliver.

Work has started on each one of these evaluations and all are scheduled for completion by December 2008. The evaluation on UNESCO’s capacity to deliver will be based on a risk assessment model, plotting the identified expected outcomes of the 34 C/4 against the risks identified by the College of ADGs earlier this year.

With regard to the question related to sunset clauses for UNESCO programmes, I fully concur with the need for a thorough programme evaluation in order to assess regularly the efficiency of all our activities and their responsiveness to country needs. I believe that the exercise of drafting the programme and budget is the right moment to take decisions in this regard, discontinuing programmes that are no longer relevant to present needs. It is clear that identifying these programmes is a

joint endeavour, and I hope that preparing the 35C/5 will be the right moment to implement this healthy practice.

While on the issue of evaluation, I would like to mention that the Oversight Advisory Committee met in late June to discuss a number of substantive issues including Risk Management, Financial and Internal Control, the opportunities from the use of evaluations, and the related functions of Oversight. I myself, and several senior managers from the Secretariat, had the opportunity to directly interact with the Members of the Committee. As a result of my discussions with the Committee, a common understanding on its methods emerged, which I have confirmed in a letter to the Members.

A series of meetings have been scheduled for the Committee up until the next General Conference, when a proposal for a standing committee will be submitted. I expect the new Director of IOS, Mr Bert Emiel Keuppens, who will take up his duties in October, to play a vital role in this regard.

Monsieur le Président,

Je souhaite enfin vous annoncer que pour la troisième fois consécutive depuis 2004, un jeu complet d'états financiers couvrant la période 2006-2007 a été remis au Commissaire aux Compte avant même la date réglementaire fixée par le Règlement financier. Le commissaire aux comptes a émis une opinion sans réserve sur nos comptes. Il dit en particulier : « Je considère que les états financiers donnent pour tous les éléments de caractère significatif une image fidèle de la situation financière de l'UNESCO au 31 décembre 2007, ainsi que du résultat des opérations et des flux de trésorerie de l'exercice clos à cette date, et qu'ils ont été établis conformément aux normes comptables du système des Nations Unies. » « En outre, j'estime que les opérations de l'UNESCO qui ont retenu mon attention, ou que j'ai examinées par sondage dans le cadre de ma vérification ont été, pour tous les aspects significatifs, conformes au Règlement financier et aux autorisations des organes délibérants ». C'est, vous le comprendrez aisément, source de grande satisfaction pour moi.

Monsieur le Président,

J'en viens maintenant à une question qui nous intéresse tous et que plusieurs délégations ont évoquée, celle de la visibilité.

C'est une question importante, et difficile à traiter à la satisfaction de tous. Nous en avons souvent débattu. Tout d'abord, laissez-moi partager avec vous la conviction que la visibilité de notre Organisation n'est pas de la seule responsabilité du Secrétariat. C'est une responsabilité collective qui implique l'engagement et la détermination de la famille UNESCO tout entière. Il ne saurait y avoir de bonne visibilité sans la participation active des Etats membres, de nos Commissions nationales, de nos partenaires institutionnels, en un mot de tous ceux qui font l'UNESCO au jour le jour.

En ce qui concerne plus précisément le rôle du Secrétariat, j'estime que de réels progrès ont été réalisés. Et ce grâce à la mobilisation continue des secteurs de programme, que notre Bureau d'information du public accompagne pour mieux faire connaître leurs principales réalisations à travers un Plan de communication consolidé. Et ce aussi malgré les moyens extrêmement modestes qui sont mis à notre disposition, et qui n'ont aucune commune mesure avec les moyens dont dispose le service de communication d'une entreprise privée.

De récentes statistiques sur le nombre d'articles dans la presse internationale se référant à l'UNESCO et à ses programmes sont à cet égard encourageantes en montrant une augmentation de 80 % sur les six premiers mois de 2008 par rapport aux mêmes mois en 2007. Voici quelques exemples de notre présence dans les médias : tout récemment, CNN a diffusé une séquence sur le partenariat UNESCO/L'Oréal sur Les femmes et la science et France-Inter a consacré une émission au patrimoine immatériel. La session du Comité du patrimoine mondial a également, comme chaque année, suscité une vaste couverture médiatique. Pour ceux qui ne les auraient pas vus, je signale en particulier la page entière consacrée le 2 juillet dernier par le *Figaro* au patrimoine mondial. J'ai également, dans le contexte du récent Sommet du G8, publié un article dans ce même journal dans lesquels je lance un appel aux pays riches en faveur de l'éducation et de la réduction de la pauvreté. L'édition dominicale du *South China Morning Post*, a publié le 13 juillet un numéro spécial incluant cet article et une interview de l'ADG/ED. Une chaine de télévision française d'information continue m'a par

ailleurs invité, à la suite de l'article du *Figaro*, à participer à un débat sur cette même question.

La stratégie renforcée pour des projets à potentiel de haute visibilité qui est en cours de réalisation permettra, j'en suis certain, d'autres améliorations sensibles.

Il n'en reste pas moins que la visibilité est à double tranchant, et n'apporte pas que du positif. C'est le cas de la parution récente d'un article dans le magazine *Der Spiegel*, que plusieurs d'entre vous ont évoquée.

J'ai été déçu, comme vous, des résultats de la très longue enquête conduite par le correspondant du *Spiegel* en France que j'ai reçu personnellement, et qui a été accompagné par le service de presse comme tout autre journaliste souhaitant mener des interviews au sein du Secrétariat. Tout d'abord, je tiens à dire qu'à aucun moment, lors des rencontres organisées avec des membres de mon équipe dirigeante ou des membres de certaines délégations, son comportement, ses propos, les questions qu'il a posées, n'ont laissé présager la tonalité finale de son article. De plus, il y a une chose que les chargés des relations avec la presse ne sont pas en mesure de faire, c'est faire dire à un journaliste autre chose que ce qu'il a envie d'écrire. Par ailleurs, je tiens à préciser que la traduction d'un article écrit dans une langue autre qu'une langue de travail est une pratique tout à fait normale et que je n'aurais moi-même - ainsi que la majeure partie de l'équipe dirigeante - pas pu prendre connaissance de sa teneur s'il n'avait pas été traduit et distribué aux personnes concernés.

Le vrai problème, c'est que l'image que l'article nous offre de notre Organisation, de son équipe dirigeante, de certains de ses ambassadeurs, est caricaturale et déplaisante. Mais, le malaise ressenti - que le Directeur de BPI et ma Porte-parole ont clairement exprimé dans une lettre adressée à la rédaction en chef du *Spiegel* et au journaliste auteur de l'enquête - ne doit pas nous empêcher de continuer à ouvrir les portes de l'UNESCO à tous les journalistes qui le souhaitent, en espérant qu'ils seront nombreux à manifester un intérêt positif pour les nombreux programmes d'envergure que mène notre Organisation.

Le rôle des ambassadeurs de bonne volonté, et leur contribution à la visibilité, a également fait l'objet d'une question spécifique. Il est vrai qu'ils sont, de par leur notoriété, particulièrement à même de divulguer nos messages et les faire

connaître à une large échelle. Et je peux vous citer de nombreux articles de presse dans lesquels ils s'expriment et soulignent leur soutien aux programmes de l'UNESCO.

La réunion annuelle qui leur permet d'échanger leurs expériences et les résultats de leurs actions est très constructive à cet égard. L'émission spéciale de la BBC réalisée en marge de leur dernière réunion, les 20 et 21 mai dernier, aura sans nul doute permit de mieux faire connaître leurs initiatives. Je fais mienne la remarque du Portugal qu'il conviendra de mobiliser davantage ce potentiel. C'est pourquoi nous réfléchissons à mieux les intégrer à l'avenir dans la stratégie globale de communication de l'Organisation.

Enfin, plusieurs questions ont été posées concernant la nouvelle politique de publication et de distribution. Comme vous l'aurez constaté, la note bleue que j'ai publiée le 25 juin dernier reprend l'ensemble des points contenus dans la résolution adoptée à ce sujet lors de la 179e session. Il me semble désormais que nous avons mis en place les procédures, les structures et les outils indispensables à un bon fonctionnement de cet important volet de notre action. J'espère que la réunion d'information d'avant-hier aura donné réponse à toutes vos questions. Je n'y reviendrai donc pas, sauf si vous souhaitez des éclaircissements complémentaires. Un document détaillé sera par ailleurs soumis sur ce sujet à la 180e session du Conseil exécutif.

Je tiens simplement à vous informer que, comme je m'y étais engagé, j'ai demandé au Service d'évaluation et d'audit (IOS) d'élucider les circonstances de la destruction constatée de certaines publications, en identifiant les responsabilités et proposant des mesures de nature à éviter qu'une telle situation ne se reproduise. Ses conclusions devraient me parvenir au cours de l'été et je ne manquerai pas de vous en rendre compte. J'ajoute que la note bleue du 25 juin prévoit déjà, dans son paragraphe 13, que toute éventuelle destruction de publications non vendues ou non distribuées devra désormais suivre une procédure précise, comportant notamment une évaluation préalable des possibilités de distribution gratuite.

Enfin, une question a été posée concernant un éventuel Fonds international pour la promotion des langues, dont j'ai en effet évoqué l'hypothèse à l'occasion des célébrations de la Journée de la langue portugaise. La généreuse donation de l'Arabie saoudite afin d'améliorer le multilinguisme de notre site web et de certains

de nos documents et le contexte de la célébration de l'Année internationale des langues en 2008 nous laissent penser qu'un Fonds pour les langues pourrait être fort utile. Si je parviens à finaliser le processus de consultation interne à temps, je soumettrai un document à la prochaine session du Conseil exécutif à cet égard. Je reçois en tout cas avec beaucoup de satisfaction la déclaration de disponibilité de la CPLP, que nous ne manquerons pas d'associer à cette initiative lorsqu'elle sera mieux définie.

Mr Chairman,

A question has been raised with respect to the additional costs related to the Fontenoy site renovation.

I am aware of the reasons why there are now additional costs of 2.2 million euros related to the Belmont Plan. In fact, I provided detailed information during the last session of the Executive Board. It would be incorrect to suppose that the cost increase was caused exclusively by the change of the contractor, namely the Project Director/Assistant to the Contracting Authority (ACA). After the death of the former project manager (Mr Yves Velter), the firm COTEBA was unable to provide an adequate level of services and subsequently requested a termination of their contract at the end of August 2007. Project teams of big companies (as was the case with COTEBA) normally work simultaneously on several projects, which diminishes their efficiency on smaller projects such as ours. After COTEBA announced its intention to leave, we immediately launched a competitive bidding process for its replacement. However, it took approximately five months to find another Project Director, as we had to relaunch the bidding process with a view to increasing the pool of potential bidders. We tried very hard to mitigate the negative effect of having no Project Director over this period, but this situation led to the postponement of some of the works to ensure adequate supervision and quality control. This triggered costs of about 150,000 euros per month, accounting for 40 percent of the 2.2 million euros.

The rest of the cost increase, and the major part, is attributable to factors such as unforeseen constraints, including unforeseen asbestos removal, as well as administrative constraints due to relevant authorizations and the tightening of health and safety regulations in the host country.

We should also not forget that the renovation project is not taking place in a vacuum. Market forces are having a direct impact on our progress and budget. For example, we had to re-launch our calls for bids for some works due to the short supply of interested construction firms. Consequently replies to invitations to tender were received late and works were delayed.

Furthermore, we had to deal with unplanned technical constraints. This was the case when the statement of work submitted to the French authorities had to be modified, following technical changes recommended by the engineers, in particular the installation of air-conditioning equipment on the roof of Building III. This caused delays in obtaining the authorization for those works.

All these factors have resulted in the slippage of the project. We now face the additional cost of accelerating the works (about 1 million euros) in order to bring the project back to the original schedule, with a completion date of mid-2009, in time for the next General Conference.

Let me add here that the general planning of the works is always delayed each time the Board or the General Conference is in session. This is done to reduce noise and to ensure a reasonable level of comfort in the building. I must pay tribute to the staff who have patiently endured the inconveniences caused by this project, be it the constant noise, or the necessary office evacuations.

The question is can we delay the works further? It is possible, but such a situation would expose the project to further risks and cost increases due to inflation and rising energy prices. The longer it takes to complete works, the more vulnerable we are to additional costs. There is also the negative impact on the working environment caused by protracted renovations. This is why I would like to ensure completion per the original timetable of the works.

I also want to keep a sense of perspective. In a project of €82.5 million executed over five years, the overall cost overrun will be under 6 percent, which is much lower than the average of 14 to 15 percent observed in France for similar projects. I would have preferred that the slippage never occurred, but it was beyond our control.

The Secretariat is looking for possible sources of financing the additional costs of €2.2 million and will inform the Headquarters Committee and the Executive Board in

due course. At this stage, we prefer to look at the possibility of utilizing available extrabudgetary resources so as not to impact negatively on the execution of the regular programme.

There was another question, whether we can provide Room I to Member States free of charge. We have examined this matter, in cooperation with the Headquarters Committee, on a number of occasions. The Headquarters Committee has adopted the principle that exhibitions and cultural events should not be subventioned from the regular programme budget and that full cost recovery should be applied. The co-operation of Member States in upholding this principle would be of great assistance.

Mr Chairman,

You will recall that at the last session of the Board, the problems of documentation, including their lateness, as well as clear feelings of frustration among many Board Members about the sheer volume of work, came to a head. I firmly committed to address the situation and to seek ways to not only improve the quality of reporting, but also to facilitate the Board's work. Indeed, the Board had requested me to take steps in this direction in Decision 175 EX/23.

Immediately after the last Board, the Secretariat looked into this matter, leading to the proposal that I made to the Chair. The salient points of this proposal include new measures to shorten documents and improve quality. I am proposing to merge some documents under my responsibility, initially in experimental mode, into one "Consolidated Report by the Director-General". We also intend to shorten the core sections of other documents to 6 pages, except for key strategic documents.

As a first step, and on a test basis, at this Board, the consolidated report will consist of two parts. The first comprises the strategic programme assessments by ADGs (i.e. at Major Programme level) in line with practice recently introduced in the C/3. This will be accompanied by on-line tabular RBM reporting by MLA, as requested by the Board. The second part includes the management chart, budget and related administrative issues.

The intention behind these proposals is to facilitate the work of the Board and provide more time for you to discuss substantive issues on which in-depth debates and actionable decisions are required. Part of the rationale is also that consolidated

reporting could help streamline and rationalize work. Certainly, for the Secretariat, it could force a greater discipline in the preparation and presentation of documents. Shorter documents could also create significant financial savings.

Mr Chairman, I have had the opportunity to speak to you about our proposals, and we welcome the wide consultations you are conducting on this issue. Let me signal that the Secretariat is prepared to work with you and Members of the Board to improve the quality of reporting and the conditions under which you work.

Mr Chairman,

Turning to the preparations of the Programme and Budget for 2010-2011 – the draft 35 C/5.

My preliminary proposals for the 35 C/5 will be based on the existing 34 C/4. Indeed, I believe the eventual review of the 34 C/4 document, referred to in one of your questions, should not occur when we are only several months into the implementation of the strategy. As many of you had expressed at the last session of the Board, it may well be too early to consider changes and adjustments. Indeed, I believe the next April session would be the proper time for reflection on the subject and for the development of eventual recommendations to the General Conference.

I am gratified to note that the five regional consultations with National Commissions concluded successfully last week. Their reports will be made available to all members of the Executive Board for the October session in a separate document. The contribution and input from all regions is very welcome during this preparatory phase, and reinforces the constructive involvement of - and ownership by - the National Commissions. Let me express my personal appreciation to all participants in this exercise for their commitment to a stronger and more relevant UNESCO. It is noteworthy that one of the main messages of these consultations was the importance of "continuity" in approach, orientations and priorities, notwithstanding certain adjustments and suggestions offered. This is very encouraging for the Organization, as it enables us to build on areas where we have reaffirmed our leadership and developed proven expertise.

I know that the question of the budget ceiling will be the key issue. While it is too early to make any concrete proposal, let me nevertheless share with you some reflections.

In the period covered by the Medium-Term Strategy for 2002-2007, the Organization's budget had suffered a loss in purchasing power of approximately 8%, even with a partial offset in one biennium where a real growth budget was obtained by the return of the United States. Throughout this period, I undertook tremendous efforts to absorb the loss of the Organization's purchasing power through the rationalization of the structure of the Secretariat, without affecting the programme budget.

For the 34 C/5, you will recall that I had initially proposed three different budget ceilings, ranging from an adjusted zero nominal growth scenario to one of modest real growth, which would have allowed the Organization to preserve its overall purchasing power and increase its programme activities marginally. The Board however requested that I present a fourth option, that of zero nominal growth. The task of preparing these four scenarios was not an easy one, I must add, and placed considerable strain on the Secretariat. I would not want to repeat that experience.

I thus presented four different budget ceiling scenarios for the draft 34 C/5. I chose as my core scenario a ceiling of US$648.3 million, which represented zero real growth, arguing that this was the budget level needed for UNESCO to live up to the many challenging responsibilities in its fields of competence.

However, recognizing that consensus could not be reached among Board Members on this core scenario, I subsequently prepared a scenario based on the minimum requirements of the Organization – that is, the US$631 million budget ceiling, which was later adopted unanimously by the General Conference.

This ceiling represented a US$17 million decrease in the volume of resources when compared with the zero real growth budget of US$648.3 million. Therefore, while it provided for a nominal increase of 3.4% over the 33 C/5, it was not sufficient to cover the technical and statutory increases estimated at more than 6%.

In order to absorb these increases, I once again made every effort to streamline the Secretariat and cut staff costs. But this was only possible up to a certain point. In the end, I was forced to make cuts to the programme budget as well.

That is, already in this biennium, we have reached the point where there is no more scope for rationalization of staff costs. I cannot go any further. It is important that the Board understands that there is no more room for manoeuvre – unless of

course we are again to touch our programme resources, but this time more radically, thereby disrupting the very essence of UNESCO and its role in the UN family.

I would therefore find it extremely difficult to conceive a budget for a reinvigorated UNESCO which would not at least maintain the value of the purchasing power of the present Programme and Budget – that is, the scenario of zero real growth.

Nevertheless, I would like to remind you that maintaining the current purchasing power would not enable me to increase the budget for human resources, even in key areas, or allocate more resources to key institutes – as some of you have called for today. It would merely mean maintaining the current level of purchasing power.

Therefore, I would even go further and say that a modest growth would be vital to enable UNESCO to take up many internal and external challenges that still need to be addressed. This, of course, would not prevent me from pursuing my continuous efforts to rationalize and streamline the work of the Organization.

Based on preliminary estimates, the difference between a zero-real growth approach and one of zero-nominal growth would be slightly over US$50 million. I shall submit a detailed explanation of how this estimate has been prepared to the Board at its next session, in particular for discussion at the meeting of the finance experts group.

This amount of US$50 million is largely needed to cover the inflationary trends and statutory adjustments essential to maintain the Organization's purchasing power at parity. In other words, a zero nominal growth scenario of $631 million for the 35 C/5, would mean in real terms, a reduction of US$50 million dollars in the volume of the Organization's resources, which is tantamount to the programme resources of the 3 sectors SC, SHS and CLT combined. That would certainly be an unimaginable and indeed untenable scenario, especially at a time when UNESCO is progressively re-establishing its presence and programmatic impact, notably at the country level in the context of UN reform.

The consideration of any other budget scenario than one that offers at least zero real growth would represent a severe impediment for UNESCO. This would be doubly difficult to digest at a time when there is a crucial need for UN agencies to prove their added value and relevance and provide Member States with the

assistance and services they rightfully expect in pursuit of national and international development goals. The latter, falling due mostly by 2015, are particularly in danger of being missed unless there is a determined push on the part of all stakeholders towards their attainment.

In addition to its country-level interventions, UNESCO must also continue to fulfill its global remit, as a lead agency in many key areas such as EFA, education for sustainable development, freshwater, science-technology-innovation policies, bioethics, culture and development, cultural diversity and the WSIS follow up – to name just a few. This is complemented by our normative tasks and agenda. All these activities also cascade to the regional level. Yet we are struggling to fund many of these core commitments.

Extrabudgetary resources might of course help to strengthen UNESCO's outreach and impact. Yet, it is difficult to see how predictable and sustainable assistance can be provided to Member States outside the regular Programme and Budget with its assessed contributions. This burden-sharing is at the heart of the multilateral process embraced and often underlined by Member States.

Many of our sister specialized agencies have benefited in past years from sometimes generous increases in their regular budgets – often at the cost of potentially divisive votes among the membership. UNESCO has not opted for this approach, but pursued with patience a consensus approach.

May I therefore express my hope that in our forthcoming deliberations Member States will support the only viable option for a viable UNESCO, namely discarding any attempt to re-introduce the counter-productive zero-nominal growth scenario, which would not leave any margin of maneuverability and would slow down the momentum achieved thus far. I ask you instead to please reflect on a scenario that would at the very least allow us to continue to be action and results oriented, and not one that would disrupt our programmes or undermine our vital commitments and responsibilities.

Mr Chairman,

I would like to end my intervention today on this plea for us all to do our utmost to ensure a vibrant future for our Organization. The large number of questions you have raised, both of a programmatic and of a non-programmatic nature,

demonstrate the interest that you, the Member States, have in UNESCO and its mission. I believe I have answered almost all of these questions and I look forward to a lively debate.