



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

Organisation
des Nations Unies
pour l'éducation,
la science et la culture

Organización
de las Naciones Unidas
para la Educación,
la Ciencia y la Cultura

Организация
Объединенных Наций по
вопросам образования,
науки и культуры

منظمة الأمم المتحدة
للتربية والعلم والثقافة

联合国教育、
科学及文化组织

Address by Ms Irina Bokova,

Director-General of UNESCO,

**on the occasion of the Information Meeting
of the Executive Board**

UNESCO, 15 June 2010

Madam Chairperson of the Executive Board,
Mr President of the General Conference,
Distinguished Members and Representatives of the Executive Board,
Colleagues and Friends,

Good morning,

I would like to begin before all else by extending a very special word of welcome to Her Royal Highness Princess Marie of Denmark. I was pleased that we were able to discuss areas of joint concern yesterday and am very happy that you have taken the time to join us here today.

I am very pleased to have this opportunity to bring you up to date on key developments since our Executive Board session last April. It has been a time of strong exposure for UNESCO, a time that has enabled me to engage directly with National Commissions through their regional consultations, a time during which I have steadily advocated for moving education to the top of political agendas and for ensuring that culture and science are integral to development policy. Organizational reforms are advancing with a view, as I have already reiterated on several occasions, to improving our effectiveness, relevance and impact. The aftermath of the financial crisis, with austerity measures under way in numerous countries, makes this all the more imperative.

I am strongly engaged in reviewing proposals from the task forces and thematic working groups. My overall aim remains unchanged: to optimize the Organization's impact, to reduce administrative costs and to ensure that we are structured to deliver results in a coordinated and effective manner. I look forward to sitting down

with my new leadership team of Assistant Directors-General next month to further discuss and follow-up on key recommendations.

If there is one event mobilizing global attention at the moment, it is of course the World Cup under way for the first time on African soil. It is a vibrant celebration of the continent's diversity, youthful energy and pride that also offers a highly visible chance to galvanize political commitment around what matters most for the future – education – or rather those who are missing out on one. In Brazil earlier this month, I joined in launching the One Goal Campaign at the Maracãna football stadium. Our Organization is in touch with South African national authorities ahead of a 7 July summit on education in Cape Town.

Education is our top priority – a political priority, a priority in programming. We must continue building up strong political momentum around education, pointing to the progress that has been made over the past decade and repeatedly demonstrating education's positive impact on all development indicators. At the last Board meeting, I informed the Board members that “I do intend, as I stated in Addis Ababa, to reposition UNESCO to make us true leaders in the field of education. We are lead agency for the second Millennium Development Goal on education and have to do more to move education up the global development agenda. I will continue to champion this absolute priority, taking it to the G8 and the G20.”

During my official visit to the Republic of Korea in May, I urged the government and the chairperson of the G20 organizing committee to make education a full-fledged part of the next meeting's agenda. I am encouraged by the overall positive response expressed on behalf of the Korean Government.

The September High-Level Plenary Meeting on the Millennium Development Goals at United Nations headquarters is one of the year's most important events for raising the profile of education and mobilizing further political momentum for achieving the education-related MDGs and the six Education for All goals. You have understandably asked several questions about the process.

The Board, at the previous session, encouraged me “to spare no efforts to ensure that education and gender are given a proper place” in the review meeting and “that the two education-related MDGs are seen in the broader EFA perspective”. It further invited me “to strengthen initiatives, together with other United Nations agencies, to interconnect the education-related MDGs with the other MDGs in order

to increase synergy and progress towards the achievement of EFA and the Dakar goals, particularly through joint actions in education, food and health”.

In this connection, I informed you very early that I intended to make all efforts to ensure that UNESCO has a more visible presence on the agenda of the MDG Summit, and that our contribution to the MDGs is reflected in the Summit Outcome document. I have personally discussed this issue at the highest level, with the Secretary-General, with the UNDP Administrator, with the President of the General Assembly and several other key stakeholders. They have encouraged me to make UNESCO more visible. We have been working on different fronts to position education high on the global agenda, with our message revolving around the critical role and benefits of education for the achievement of all Millennium Development Goals.

Consultations are under way to finalize the draft of the Summit's Outcome Document in July 2010. In line with my discussions and announcement at the Executive Board, I also sent two letters to Permanent Delegates of UNESCO Member States, transmitting for information the language I had proposed and seeking their support. Likewise, after I had sent the letters to Permanent Delegations, the Secretariat sent this information to National Commissions and Heads of Field Offices, seeking their involvement and support for my proposals.

To be a visible Organization, we must be in a position to propose approaches to peace, poverty alleviation and development that not only respond to current challenges but also build on positive trends. UNESCO is the only Organization in the United Nations system that can broaden current thinking about development to encompass the pivotal role of culture.

Nor is it by chance that we are leading the United Nations International Year for the Rapprochement of Cultures. The power of cultural diversity and dialogue, the role of shared values to build peace in a globalized world have not been sufficiently recognized in international relations. Our voice, I am convinced, must be heard.

During my participation in the Third Forum of the Alliance of Civilizations, I took part in the plenary summit on Cultural Diversity as a Pathway to Peace and the Ministerial Meeting of the Alliance's Group of Friends. I also led a UNESCO-organized plenary session on Education for Intercultural Citizenship. I am pleased to have signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Jorge Sampaio, the United Nations Secretary-General's High Representative for the Alliance of Civilizations

that delineates a focused and complementary collaboration between UNESCO and the Alliance for the next two years. This will reinforce our respective capacity to foster dialogue and reach out to youth through multiple channels.

In many parts of the world, a new trend has been evolving over the last decade, and mainly in developing countries. I am speaking about culture as a real economic driver. Culture creates jobs, it is a factor of social cohesion, a force for reconciliation and peace-building in post-conflict situations. For all these reasons I am lobbying to ensure that the contribution of culture to development is more widely recognized in the MDG process. I recently sent a letter to the entire membership of the General Assembly, but also to Permanent Delegations and National Commissions recalling the importance of the work of UNESCO for the achievement of the MDGs, especially in the area of education as I already pointed out but also of culture and development. I am glad that a large portion of the United Nations membership has acknowledged the relevance of our arguments. In both Brazil and at the World Expo in Shanghai, China, I also had the pleasure to present our flagship report on investing in cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue.

Also let me mention that on each of my missions, I insist on meeting with the United Nations Country Team and the United Nations Resident Coordinator to discuss UNESCO's role and mandate. Every time I stress our commitment to the United Nations "Delivering as One" reform process and to the importance we place on fully participating in this development project.

We are also reinforcing South-South cooperation, with a special focus on Africa. In Brazil, I signed an agreement with the government that promotes triangular technical cooperation in developing countries in our fields of competence. The memorandum that I signed with China, where I met with Prime Minister Wen Jiabao, includes initiatives in Africa: China will provide through UNESCO 100 full four-year scholarships in the field of science. More broadly, the agreement covers educational reform, literacy, capacity development, science and support to several cultural programmes. I am grateful for this proposal.

We cannot underestimate, ladies and gentlemen, the importance of reaching a wide spectrum of audiences to explain the importance of promoting a humanist approach to development that encompasses attention to education, science, culture and communications. This was the message that I shared with the regional

consultations of National Commissions in the Asia-Pacific and Europe and North America that I recently attended.

We have the know-how and convening power respond coherently, cooperatively and creatively to today's global challenges. Take the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission. Just last week on World Ocean Day I was present to launch the 50th anniversary celebrations of the Commission. With its solid membership of 138 nations, its partnerships with other bodies and broad remit, the IOC has unparalleled legitimacy in its field, offering a model of best practice in addressing the world's most pressing problems collectively. Let me reiterate here my strong commitment to support the IOC and to expand its cooperation with other activities of UNESCO in the scientific field.

Madam Chairperson, distinguished Board Members,

Let me now turn to a subject of great concern to me. I refer to the UNESCO-Obiang Nguema Mbasogo International Prize for Research in the Life Sciences.

Let me first summarize the facts. The Prize was established in October 2008 by the Executive Board in 180 EX/Decision 57. The International Jury for the Prize was appointed by my predecessor, former Director-General Koïchiro Matsuura in August 2009. When I took up my duties on November 15, 2009, the deadline for the Prize had already been extended because of the insufficient number of candidates – only four. In December 2009, I felt still that this number – which then stood at 14 valid ones – remained inadequate. Therefore I decided to extend the deadline for the nomination process to 30 April 2010, to give credence to the Prize process in full conformity with the procedure and decision of the Board. And I did discuss this with Jean Ping, the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, during a visit to Addis at the end of February.

In a letter dated 12 March 2010, I informed the President of Equatorial Guinea about the extended deadline and plans for the award ceremony to be held eventually in June 2010. The announcement of the new deadline was also made to all Member States and the scientific community on 22 April.

Since the beginning of the year I have started receiving criticisms from NGOs and media about the Prize. I reported to the last session of the Executive Board on these developments. In the absence of any objection from the Board, I considered that it was my obligation to continue with the procedure.

Therefore, the Jury met on 18 and 19 May 2010. The outcome of this meeting, I have to say, was without precedent in the life of our Organization. One member withdrew from the process just prior to the deliberations, partly because of the controversy that the Prize has raised in the international community. The four remaining Jury members appealed to me that I enter into consultations with Member States, also in light of these concerns.

The situation, I have to say, has evolved dramatically since the Jury met. I am receiving letters, messages and statements on a daily basis from a whole range of constituencies from around the world – not only from NGOs but from representatives from the scientific community, from Member States, parliamentarians and intellectuals from all regions. Many have urged me to sever UNESCO's association with the Prize. I have here a full folder of letters that I have received over the last month.

Because the decision to establish this Prize was adopted by the Executive Board, because the Jury recommended that I engage in a consultation with Member States, and in light of the many letters of criticism addressed to me, I immediately requested to meet with you Mrs Chairperson of the Executive Board in order to discuss the manner in which to proceed. This meeting, attended by the Vice-Chairs of the Board, took place on 26 May.

Let me once again say that I have heard the appeal by the Jury members to engage with you. I have also heard the voices of eminent scientists from around the world including Nobel Prize Peace laureate Desmond Tutu, Noble Prize Physics laureate Claude Cohen-Tannoudji, Nobel Prize Chemistry laureate John Polanyi, prominent Japanese scientists such as Professor Minoru Obayashi who is also the former President of the Civil Forum for Tokyo International Conference on African Development, Professor Michiya Kumaoka from the University of Tokyo, Professor Kinhide Mushakoji, former Vice-President of the United Nations University and Professor Tatsuo Hayashi, President of the Africa Japan Forum. The laureates of several UNESCO prizes have also expressed their concern: Abdallah S. Daar, recipient in 2005 of UNESCO's Avicenna Prize for Ethics in Science and a Member of the UNESCO International Bioethics Committee; Belita Koiller, a laureate of the L'Oréal-UNESCO Women in Science prize; Monica Gonzales from Chile and Lydia Cacho from Mexico, respectively the 2010 and 2008 laureates of the UNESCO/Guillermo Cano World Press Freedom Prize. Ms Cacho is also a Member

of the High-Level Panel on Peace and Dialogue among Cultures. I am just citing a few of the intellectuals who have written to me.

I have heard the voice of the many intellectuals, journalists and of course governments and parliamentarians who have appealed to me to protect and preserve the prestige of our Organization.

This global campaign is unmatched in scope by any other event in the last decades of the life of this Organization. As Director-General it is my firm belief that my first and foremost responsibility, above all other considerations, is to protect UNESCO's prestige and to alert Member States when I see a serious danger before us.

Now, ladies and gentlemen, is such time.

I am fully cognizant of my obligation regarding decisions of the Executive Board but I am also cognizant of my responsibility towards this Organization, as I stated, which is foremost and above all to preserve its name, integrity and high stature.

I have come to you with a strong message of alarm and anxiety. I am fully aware that the Executive Board took a decision two years ago, but I believe that given the changing circumstances and the unprecedented developments of the past months, we must be courageous and recognize our responsibilities, for it is our Organization that is at stake. Therefore, at this stage, I will not set a date for awarding the Prize.

I appeal to you, the Executive Board, to continue its consultations in a spirit of mutual respect and dignity for all partners concerned, taking into account all recent developments, so that the issue could possibly be addressed in a constructive way at the next session of the Board.

This is not an issue of concern to just one group or one region. It concerns us all and it puts the reputation and credibility of our Organization into play.

Let me also mention that at the next session of the Board, I intend to present proposals on amending criteria for prizes based on the recommendations of the Working Group on Prizes that I established, which will be looking ahead to our future activities.

Madam Chairperson, distinguished Board Members,

Let me turn to another set of questions put forward to me. The visibility of our Organization can benefit from intellectual and policy-type discussions. This is precisely the objective of the anticipation and foresight programme. After running the 21st century talks for several years, this approach was reviewed in order to provide more effective policy discussions. Over the past two years, the UNESCO future forums have addressed leading global issues such as the financial crisis and the knowledge revolution. As one of the objectives of the programme is to stimulate policy discussions in Member States, let me also inform you that immediately following the regional C/5 consultations for GRULAC in Trinidad and Tobago, a UNESCO future forum will be organized on development challenges in Small Island Developing States, with special attention on the Caribbean.

Other events organized in Member States over the last year include one on the green society in China and on middle-income countries in Uruguay.

All these developments have been reported in the relevant Executive Board documents and to the General Conference. I feel that we are on the right track with this programme and that many valuable policy-style discussions have taken place over the past two years that have influenced the intergovernmental discourse and were also picked up by the international press. But of course I agree that there is still a lot to be done to make our work more visible and show its impact.

Let me now move on to address specific questions that I have not covered yet, beginning with Gender Equality and Africa.

We are seizing high-profile occasions to advance gender equality. At the end of this month UNESCO is organizing a ministerial meeting with UNICEF on women's and girls' education during the ECOSOC Annual Ministerial meeting dedicated to gender equality and empowerment in New York. In September, a UNESCO Future Forum in Athens will attract prominent figures around the theme "Gender Equality: the Missing Link." Finally, in late September, UNESCO will co-host the Expert Group Meeting to prepare for the 2011 session of the Commission on the Status of Women that will centre around the Education of women and girls. I have also asked the director of the division for gender equality to propose concrete measures for improving the effectiveness of the implementation of the Gender Equality Action Plan. A consultation process is currently under way, also drawing on some of the recommendations of the Task Force on Gender Equality.

Turning to our other priority area, I am convinced that we must ensure that we are structured to delivery effectively in Africa. The intersectoral platform “Priority Africa” was an effort, by the Organization, to give new impetus to the Priority Africa programme. An upcoming review of all the intersectoral platforms will enable us to decide on the most adapted orientations for the future.

Let me turn to another set of questions that I have received on the Middle East. UNESCO has, over the past months, continued to closely monitor the situation in the region and to implement activities in its fields of competence. As far as the Old City of Jerusalem and the Mughrabi Ascent are concerned, the Secretariat has received no new information since the last session of the Executive Board. However, these two items will be discussed at the forthcoming session of the World Heritage Committee in Brazil (25 July-3 August).

There are some new initiatives to which I should like to bring your attention. The first one concerns a possible partnership with the Islamic Development Bank. The Bank is launching a major plan of \$1.6 billion for the reconstruction of Gaza that features education as one of its priorities. UNESCO is exploring ways of cooperating on the plan with a view to improving quality education in scientific disciplines through the provision of educational material and equipment to laboratories.

Another new initiative launched by the Ramallah Office is a project to construct a protective shelter and garden complex for the 8th century Omayyad site of Hisham’s Palace – Khirbet al-Mafjar. The world-renowned Swiss architect Peter Zumthor has prepared a design for the shelter, estimated to cost \$7 million. This shelter would allow the outstanding mosaic of the Great Bath to be uncovered, and the site being made fully accessible to tourists. We have developed this initiative in cooperation with the Palestinian Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities as a contribution to this year’s celebration of the 10,000th anniversary of Jericho.

And finally, let me mention that early next month, UNESCO and the Saudi Committee for the Relief of the Palestinian People will sign an agreement to support the right to education of university students, particularly those from the most disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds and living in marginalized areas. The planned programme totalling \$2.9 million will establish or support libraries that contain vital course materials for students in each of the 12 districts in the West Bank and Gaza.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Allow me to now run through questions concerning our sectoral programmes, beginning with education.

You have asked about the global education conferences held in 2008 and 2009 – together, these conferences generated tremendous interest in the education and policy-making communities. I will submit to the spring session of the Executive Board, specific reporting on the follow-up to these conferences. Let me remind me you that my predecessor submitted a report on this issue to the General Conference at its 35th session, which is available on the website.

With specific regard to the World Conference on Higher Education, the Education Sector is actively following up on the six areas of work identified in the Call for Action. They range from capacity development on quality assurance in Africa to platforms on distance education and the organization of ministerial policy fora. In the coming weeks, a questionnaire will be sent to all Member States regarding the follow-up to this world conference at national level.

I will turn now to questions regarding specific aspects of our programme work. Technical and vocational education is one of the Education Sector's four priority areas in document 35 C/5. We are developing methodological frameworks, tools and guidelines to strengthen skills development for youth and adults. Country-level activities are implemented by field offices, supported by the regional bureaux and Headquarters.

The UNESCO-UNEVOC International Centre for Technical and Vocational Education and Training in Bonn, Germany, plays an important role as a resource and capacity development centre. It facilitates knowledge-sharing and the exchange of good practices, and coordinates an international network of specialized centres. Furthermore, initiatives are being taken to gradually involve the UNEVOC centres in policy development work at the country level.

Teachers are one of the building blocks for Education for All. You have rightly expressed concern about Africa – it is where the need for additional teachers is greatest. I am pleased to say that several Member States, including Israel, Monaco and the United States of America, have recently committed funds to support activities on teacher education in Africa. I would like to take this occasion to strongly encourage Member States to make voluntary contributions that will enable

UNESCO to further scale up its impact in this important field. UNESCO is also currently exploring options for financial support from the United Arab Emirates for an important teacher training programme in Africa. Every effort will be made to ensure that South-South and triangular North-South-South cooperation are used as modalities for implementing these activities.

Within its main priorities – literacy, skills and teachers – we firmly support mother tongue instruction and multilingual education. It is a means of improving education quality, promoting social and gender equality and encouraging understanding between different population groups. I would encourage interested delegations to look at our position paper on “Education in a Multilingual World” published in 2003 and that still guides our efforts in this direction.

As the *EFA Global Monitoring Report* indicates, achieving education for all in low-income countries will require a major increase in financing. The Education for All Fast Track Initiative is severely under-funded. You have asked about a pledging conference. In light of the financial crisis, such an event at the present moment is not likely to bring in substantial resources. We are working to reinforce and stabilize the Fast-Track Initiative, and to discuss new avenues for cooperation during and after the MDG Summit in September. Innovative approaches to education financing should be part of this exercise.

UNESCO is active on this front. In 2009, the General Conference requested that the Director-General establish an advisory panel of experts on debt swaps and innovative approaches to education financing. Argentina has been a leading advocate of the debt swaps initiative. As a result of this, UNESCO has developed a proposal on the composition and mandate of this panel. It reflects recent developments, namely the establishment in early 2010 of a task force on innovative financing for education by the leading group on innovative financing for development. This body brings together 59 countries and various multilaterals and NGOs, and its secretariat is located within the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs. UNESCO is a member of this new task force that will focus specifically on innovative financing for education. We intend to ensure close coordination between it and the panel on debt swaps. The first meeting of this panel is expected to take place in September at Headquarters. A special account will be created to attract extrabudgetary resources based on the advisory panel's proposals, and to strengthen our expertise in this field. I will ensure that you are duly informed about

developments so that you can express opinions during forthcoming information meetings.

I have already briefly referred to the great importance I place on reinforcing South-South cooperation, especially in the area of education. To mobilize funds for various educational projects, I recently sent personal letters to Member States – both present and potential contributors. From its end, the Education Sector is approaching potential private partners and recently met with the special UNDP unit in charge of South-South cooperation to explore opportunities for collaboration. With regard to the pilot projects, three are close to finished and a report will be submitted to the next session of the Board. The project on mother-tongue languages in Africa will be completed by the end of 2010 and a report available in 2011.

I have been asked about mobilizing funds in Africa for the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development. While UNESCO has a leadership and coordination role for the Decade, Member States must be in the driver's seat for ensuring implementation of the Decade's activities at national level. The Bonn Declaration adopted at last year's World Conference on Education for Sustainable Development stipulates that Member States have to make significant efforts to mobilize adequate resources and funding. One route is to integrate Education for Sustainable Development into national development policy and budgetary frameworks. At global and national level, UNESCO, with all the Decade's partners, will look at further integrating Education for Sustainable Development into United Nations common country programming processes and other national policy frameworks and international development initiatives.

Allow me to respond to a question about UNESCO Chairs and the UNITWIN network. Unquestionably, this programme is a unique bridge-builder between research and decision-making, and between academia and civil society. Since new strategic orientations were implemented in 2007, the Chairs and networks have become strong institutional partners for advancing our work in Education for All, education for sustainable development, intercultural dialogue, water management, bioethics and the use of information and communication technologies, to give just a few examples. Triangular North-South-South cooperation is also being enhanced, through the creation of subregional poles of excellence and innovation in specific areas of research and training.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Let me move onto the area of the natural sciences. I received several questions concerning the International Basic Sciences Programme. I would like to reassure you that substantial measures are already being taken to alleviate the financial constraints of this Programme through cost-sharing partnerships, streamlining and extrabudgetary contributions from Member States. A study to explore the feasibility of increasing the Programme's budget in the next biennium will be done next year and options for further financing presented to the Executive Board at its next session. Meanwhile, the scientific board of the Programme is being consulted and new programmatic orientations will also be presented to the next Executive Board session.

With regard to the Man and the Biosphere Programme, efforts are currently under way to negotiate a priority place for sites that are both biosphere reserves and World Heritage sites within the REDD and inter-agency REDD-plus initiative. REDD stands for the reduction of emissions from deforestation and forest degradation. The Man and the Biosphere International Coordination Council, held at UNESCO Headquarters earlier this month, also called for biosphere reserves to play an enhanced role in Member States as learning laboratories, through for example setting up working groups on key sustainable development topics. Participants also called for setting up an observatory on climate change that would collect information from the World Network of Biosphere Reserves, thus directly contributing to the monitoring of climate change.

Regarding the question on the Africa Union's Consolidated Plan of Action on Science and Technology, UNESCO contributed financially and technically to the fourth African Ministerial Conference on Science and Technology held in Cairo this year. I held in-depth commissions on science and technology during my high-level meetings at the end of February with the Africa Commission in Addis. Moreover, in cooperation with the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, the Bamako Cluster Office and the Malian Ministry for Higher Education, Science and Technology, UNESCO organized a training session in Bamako last May to reinforce capacity-building in science policies and evidence-based policy-making. Representatives from the 15 ECOWAS countries shared experiences in science policy and the use of statistics and indicators in policy-making. Next week in Addis Ababa we are co-organizing, with the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, a conference entitled "Science with Africa II". It will bring together policy-makers and the scientific

community from across Africa and globally to reflect on innovation. During the Conference, the United Nations Commission for Africa will also launch the African Innovation Endowment Fund, with participation and assistance from UNESCO.

In the meantime, UNESCO continues to provide technical assistance to African Member States to review their science, technology and innovation policies. Last May, a high-level workshop was held at Headquarters on “Strengthening national capacities for science policy and management in Nigeria”, to give one example. Funded by the Government of Nigeria with support from Japan, the meeting aimed to design, with Nigerian stakeholders, a roadmap for advancing science, technology and innovation policy in Africa’s most populous nation, and to identify the role of different institutions in this exercise.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

As you are aware, UNESCO is coordinating the major events that will take place worldwide in 2010 for International Year of Youth, which will be launched on 12 August. UNESCO is also a member of the International Committee for the preparation of the World Youth Conference to be held in Mexico from 23 to 27 August 2010.

Other activities in UNESCO’s programme for youth fall within the scope of the International Year for the Rapprochement of Cultures. I would mention, among others, the joint publication by UNESCO and the Inter-American Development Bank on “Best Practices in Youth Programmes and Policies in Latin America and the Caribbean”. I would also cite the Fourth UNESCO Asian Youth Forum, jointly organized with the Korean National Commission for UNESCO, to be held in September 2010.

The adoption at the last session of the Executive Board of the UNESCO Strategy on African Youth gave a fresh boost to our action in Africa. In that connection, I should like to express my enormous gratitude to the Africa Group for its substantial support. I know that the Africa Group is very firmly committed to pursuing its efforts throughout the entire implementation phase of the project.

In the first stage, UNESCO will focus on a joint campaign with the African Union for the ratification and implementation of the African Youth Charter. There will be a regional study to consolidate the 2011 UNESCO global report on youth civic engagement, and a framework for the development of pro-youth policies.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Our Organization has, obviously, been proceeding with its work for Haiti.

Since the earthquake on 12 January, we have dispatched four onsite missions from the Culture Sector, four from the Education Sector, three from the Communication and Information Sector and three from the Natural Sciences Sector and Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission.

We have also strengthened the expertise available in our Office in Port-au-Prince: four additional Professionals are now working there, in the education, culture and communication fields. I would like to thank Norway in this regard for sending qualified experts to work with us in our office.

Since January, apart from about \$0.5 million in funding from the regular budget, \$4 million in extrabudgetary funds have been raised to benefit Haiti. Allow me here to express my most sincere gratitude in particular to the GRULAC States, the African States, Saudi Arabia and the Arab States, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Bulgaria, and indeed the other States in the ASPAC Group and Group I.

This funding has been used to set up the projects I told you about at our most recent meetings: securing the Haitian cultural heritage, reopening community radio stations, reopening the Early Warning Centre for natural disasters, vocational training in anti-seismic construction techniques, and psychosocial support for teachers and pupils alike.

The Interim Haiti Recovery Commission met for the first time yesterday, 14 June, in Port-au-Prince, under its Co-Chairs, Prime Minister Bellerive and United Nations Special Envoy, Bill Clinton. This working group, as you know, was set up at the International Conference in New York on 31 March 2010, at which I represented UNESCO. Our Organization presented three specific projects and one joint project with the International Labour Organization. These four new projects total \$3.75 million. They cover the continued development of community radio in Haiti, continued support for higher education and vocational training in Haiti, and the development of sustainable forms of economic activity in the city of Jacmel, especially in the field of crafts and the restoration of the architectural heritage. Lastly, the World Heritage Centre will be sending a new mission to Port-au-Prince at the beginning of July to carry out a fresh assessment of priority projects, in coordination with our Haitian partners.

I consider it important to keep you informed of the actions we are taking in Haiti, and to assure you that Haiti remains a priority for the Organization.

Turning to the synergy of action between the various Funds hosted by the Culture Sector, I should start by recalling that each of these Funds is governed by specific rules and statutes. The objective of the International Fund for the Promotion of Culture is to promote cultural and creative activities, while the objective of the International Fund for Cultural Diversity is to strengthen cultural industries. They are different in scope, but coexist and complement each other.

Pursuant to a decision adopted by the Executive Board at its last session, the External Auditor has been requested to conduct an evaluation of the International Fund for the Promotion of Culture. A report thereon will be submitted at the next session of the Executive Board.

On the subject of the World Heritage Centre, I can confirm that the recruitment of a Deputy Director for Management will be completed before the next session of the World Heritage Committee in Brasilia. The process of recruiting a new Director for the World Heritage Centre is also well under way, and the post will be advertised very shortly. I hope that highly qualified candidates from all parts of the world will apply. Until the recruitment process is complete, Mr Bandarin will serve as Acting Director of the Centre.

With regard to the questions about the High-Level Panel on Peace and Dialogue among Cultures, I can confirm that I have suggested that the Panel should hold its second meeting in New York in late 2010, on the occasion of the close of the International Year for the Rapprochement of Cultures, and the close of the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World.

We are in the process of narrowing down and defining the central theme for this meeting, of which I have great expectations in terms of substantiating our thinking and actions in promoting a fairer and more balanced world.

I fully subscribe to the idea that the culture of peace is a part of everything UNESCO does. I firmly believe that it lies at the heart of our mandate, and that we must give it real expression in all our programmes. I have appointed a focal point in my Office, Ms Mariama Saïdou-Djermakoye, who will be responsible for coordinating all cross-cutting and intersectoral activities on this subject.

As requested by the Executive Board, I will include in the preliminary proposals regarding the Draft Programme and Budget for 2012-2013 which I will submit to the Board at its autumn session, proposals concerning the programme of action for the culture of peace, including intersectoral and interdisciplinary activities, taking into account the global context and new and current challenges. As you all know, I am currently consulting the National Commissions as part of the round of regional consultations. I will be gathering their opinions. I am also expecting suggestions from Member States, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations.

As coordinator of the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World which ends in 2010, UNESCO is drafting a report which will be submitted in autumn to the Executive Board, and to the the United Nations General Assembly, on the actions conducted throughout the world over the last ten years.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

I shall now turn to UNESCO's communication and information programme. This represents a series of actions which must be at the heart of development, in particular to attain the Millennium Development Goals.

Our era has opened up new and exceptional opportunities of which we at UNESCO would like to take full advantage. In this regard, I wish to draw your attention to the Broadband Commission for Digital Development, an initiative launched by UNESCO together with the International Telecommunication Union, on the occasion of the 2010 Forum of the World Summit on the Information Society held in Geneva in May 2010.

The Broadband Commission is made up of a group of leaders from the political and business worlds, civil society and international organizations. Its role will be to identify and define key criteria enabling the use of broadband in order to advance more quickly, within the framework of a global partnership, towards attaining the Millennium Development Goals.

Evidently, as Vice-Chair of the Broadband Commission for Digital Development, I will participate in the meeting of the Commission in Geneva on 11 July this year. The Commission will submit its final report to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and Member States on 19 September 2010 in New York, on the occasion

of the Summit of the United Nations on the Millennium Development Goals. I assure you that you will be informed long before the launch of this report in New York.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

In reply to a question on the involvement of NGOs in the preparation of the C/5 document, I would like to notify you that the NGO Liaison Committee has already participated in three regional consultations of National Commissions. As is customary, NGOs were invited to fill out the questionnaire on document 36 C/5, and we are going to organize a special consultation with them on this subject.

I will also request Assistant Directors-General to call on NGOs more systematically, to better use their potential and capabilities. I will also charge them with identifying new non-governmental partners.

At the same time, we will create a “map” showing the development of regional and national NGOs according to UNESCO fields of competence, and we are considering creating NGO focal points in field offices.

I call on Member States to fully assume their responsibility, which is to support and strengthen the capacities of their National Commissions. UNESCO will continue to contribute as much as it possibly can.

I would add that a guide for National Commissions on public information will be available at the end of the year. Lastly, I encourage National Commissions to develop their websites, which are a very effective tool for communication and exposure.

Ladies and gentlemen,

As I have already said on several occasions, I am absolutely determined to maintain my commitment and continue my efforts to optimize the effectiveness of UNESCO, and to ensure a better balance between resources for administration and programmes.

I am also analysing our presence in the field, which must be reconsidered in the light of the United Nations reform and the “Delivering as One” agenda at country level. In this regard, the regional dimension is a major element.

At the next session of the Executive Board I will present you with specific proposals. This new strategy of operations in the field includes a review of the functions and responsibilities of field office administrative officers.

The implementation of all of the measures that I will propose to you will be gradual and transparent: that is why I have decided that a new section will be introduced for that purpose on the UNESCO website, under the heading "Director-General".

Turning now to the follow-up of recommendations from the independent external evaluation, it appears that interaction with the Executive Board and the delegations is essential. The evaluation timetable forces us to hold a specific information meeting on 6 July, whereas the final report will be available for the Board's October session.

Once the specific recommendations of the evaluation are available, we will use the mechanism set up by the Internal Oversight Service to formulate a response and action plan for each of them.

In reply to a question on the Advisory Committee for Works of Art, allow me to remind you that the fourth and last meeting of this Committee will be held on 22 June. After that date, the terms of reference and membership of the Committee will be renewed. I hope to receive excellent applications, very representative in terms of geographical distribution. I wish to specify that it is up to me to appoint the new members of this Committee, which I will do after the autumn Board session. The six members of the Committee must be recognized experts in the field of modern and traditional art; their knowledge must encompass all the regions of the world. I wish to recall that the Committee must not accrue costs for the Organization and that it does not have a specific budget. This means that all travel and accommodation expenses are the responsibility of members of the Committee.

Lastly, I wish to inform you that the revision of the Organization's Publication and Distribution Plan is well under way. This new Plan should enable the quality of information provided to be improved. You will receive details on this subject at the autumn session of the Executive Board.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

I hope that I have answered the questions which you transmitted to me. I have also shared some of my concerns with you. If you would like to obtain further

explanations on certain points, I will answer you during the question-and-answer session which we are about to begin.

Our peace mandate is powerful and our Organization's fields of expertise are unique. Therefore our action must also be unique.

Above all, we aspire to be effective. We want the impact of both our intellectual and concrete action to be tangible, confirmable and clear.

Thank you for your attention.