



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization

# Executive Board

Hundred and eighty-seventh session

# 187 EX/48

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Item 48 of the provisional agenda

## **IMPLEMENTATION OF 180 EX/DECISION 57 ON THE UNESCO-OBIANG NGUEMA MBASOGO INTERNATIONAL PRIZE FOR RESEARCH IN THE LIFE SCIENCES**

### **SUMMARY**

This item has been included in the agenda of the 187th session of the Executive Board at the request of Congo and Côte d'Ivoire on behalf of the Member States of the African Group of UNESCO. Attached hereto are an explanatory note and a draft decision prepared by the Congo and Côte d'Ivoire on behalf of the Member States of the African Group of UNESCO.

Action expected of the Executive Board: proposed decision in paragraph 8.

## EXPLANATORY NOTE

1. At its 180th session, the Executive Board adopted 180 EX/Decision 57 establishing and endorsing the UNESCO-Obiang Nguema Mbasogo International Prize for Research in the Life Sciences, in accordance with UNESCO criteria, norms and procedures as set out in 171 EX/Decision 24 on the overall review of UNESCO prizes.
2. We note with concern that at the time of writing implementation has not taken effect, despite initial activity with the meeting of jury members and the designation of prizewinners in May 2010.
3. A high-level mission (Secretariat and Member States) visited President Obiang Nguema Mbasogo in Equatorial Guinea in order to reach an agreement to postpone the awarding of the prize in June 2010.
4. At the information meeting of the Executive Board on 15 July 2010, the Director-General expressed her concern following the actions of certain non-governmental organizations and indicated that she would bring the matter before the Executive Board.
5. Following these developments, the Executive Board considered the issue at its 185th session and decided to “suspend the implementation of 180 EX/Decision 57 on the UNESCO Obiang Nguema Mbasogo International Prize for Research in the Life Sciences and to continue the consultations among all parties concerned, in a spirit of mutual respect until a consensus is reached” (185 EX/Decision 47).
6. To date, it must be acknowledged that no consultation results have been brought to the attention of States Members of the Executive Board.
7. Given that the prize is the first African programme prize in the history of UNESCO, and given its objectives of reinforcing capacities in the field of life sciences, the seventeenth ordinary session of the Summit of Heads of State and Government of the African Union, held in Malabo on 30 June and 1 July 2011, recognized the significance of the programme for the international scientific community and the relevance of 180 EX/Decision 57. In the light of these considerations, the Summit of Heads of State urged UNESCO to implement 180 EX/Decision 57 (African Union decision annexed hereto).
8. In requesting the inclusion of a new item in the agenda of the 187th session of the Executive Board, the aim, beyond this prize, is for Member States to safeguard, in a spirit of ethics and shared responsibility, the credibility of the Organization, and of the Executive Board in particular, which must remain consistent with its own decisions.

### **DRAFT DECISION SUPPORTED BY ALL AFRICAN STATES AT UNESCO AND PROPOSED FOR CONSIDERATION AT THE 187th SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD**

ALGERIA, BURKINA FASO, COTE D'IVOIRE, DJIBOUTI, GHANA, KENYA, MADAGASCAR, NIGER, DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO, CONGO, UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA, SENEGAL, ZAMBIA and ZIMBABWE

The Executive Board,

1. Bearing in mind that the Republic of Equatorial Guinea, at the 34th session of the General Conference, proposed that UNESCO establish a prize for the purpose of rewarding projects and activities of an individual or institutions that have contributed, through research in the life sciences, to improving the quality of human life,
2. Noting that the proposed prize is consistent with UNESCO's goals and policies and is linked to the goals of the Medium-Term Strategy (2008-2009), in particular overarching objective 2

“Mobilizing science knowledge and policy for sustainable development” and its associated strategic programme objective 4 “Fostering policies and capacity-building in science, technology and innovation”,

3. Stressing the objectives of the prize in promoting scientific research to combat diseases such as AIDS, malaria, tuberculosis and other diseases that have adverse effects on the people of developing countries,
4. Also noting that the Executive Board examined and approved in October 2001 the establishment of the UNESCO-Obiang Nguema Mbasogo International Prize for Research in the Life Sciences (180 EX/Decision 57),
5. Recalling that the approval of the UNESCO-Obiang Nguema Mbasogo International Prize for Research in the Life Sciences by the Executive Board is consistent with the criteria and guidelines laid down for UNESCO prizes in document 171 EX/19,
6. Further recalling that the Director-General decided at the information meeting of States Members of the Executive Board held on 15 June 2010 to place the matter of the implementation of 180 EX/Decision 57 before the Executive Board,
7. Considering the decision taken in 185 EX/Decision 47 to “suspend the implementation of 180 EX/Decision 57 on the UNESCO Obiang Nguema Mbasogo International Prize for Research in the Life Sciences and to continue the consultations among all parties concerned, in a spirit of mutual respect until a consensus is reached”,
8. Considering lastly the unanimous support of African Heads of State and Government for the UNESCO-Obiang Nguema Mbasogo International Prize for Research in the Life Sciences, which will contribute to the promotion of research in the life sciences, as stated in Assembly/AU/Dec.389 adopted at the seventeenth ordinary session of the Summit of Heads of State and Government of the African Union, held at Malabo on 30 June and 1 July 2011,
9. Urges the Director-General to implement 180 EX/Decision 57.

**DECISION ON THE UNITED NATIONS EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND CULTURAL  
ORGANIZATION-OBIANG-NGUEMA MBASOGO INTERNATIONAL  
PRIZE FOR RESEARCH IN LIFE SCIENCES**

The Assembly,

1. **TAKES NOTE** of the communication by the Republic of Equatorial Guinea regarding the United Nations Education, Science and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)-Obiang Nguema Mbasogo International Prize for Research in Life Sciences;
2. **SUPPORTS** this Prize which will contribute to the promotion of research in the Life Sciences;
3. **URGES** UNESCO to implement the commitments already made in this respect as reflected in Decision 180 EX/57 of the Executive Board of this Institution.

