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CONTRIBUTION OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS TO THE PREPARATION OF THE DRAFT PROGRAMME AND BUDGET FOR 2018-2021 (39 C/5)

SUMMARY

In accordance with 200 EX/Decision 23, the Director-General transmits to the Executive Board, for information, the contribution of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to the preparation of document 39 C/5, approved by the 2016 International Conference of Non-Governmental Organizations in official partnership with UNESCO (Paris, 12-14 December 2016) pursuant to the Directives concerning UNESCO's partnership with non-governmental organizations (36 C/Resolution 108).



I. INTRODUCTION

1. The contribution of NGOs in the programming cycle of the Organization is an important pillar of the Directives concerning UNESCO's partnership with non-governmental organizations (36 C/Resolution 108), which detail the procedures for consultation with NGOs on the preparation of the Medium-Term Strategy (C/4) and the Programme and Budget (C/5).

2. At its 200th session, the Executive Board highlighted "the importance of the contribution of NGOs in the Organization's programming cycle" and invited "the Director-General to inform it of their opinions and suggestions relating to the preliminary proposals concerning the Draft Programme and Budget for 2018-2021 (39 C/5) particularly those made at the International Conference of Non-Governmental Organizations to be held from 12 to 14 December 2016, at UNESCO Headquarters" (200 EX/Decision 23).

II. CONTRIBUTION OF NGOS TO THE PREPARATION OF THE DRAFT PROGRAMME AND BUDGET FOR 2018-2021 (39 C/5)

3. In accordance with the abovementioned Directives, within the framework of the preparation of draft document 39 C/5, the Director-General invited NGOs to contribute to the consultation process by responding to the questionnaire prepared for this purpose. Summaries of the responses provided by 84 NGOs and foundations to the questionnaire, available also online, were submitted to the Executive Board at its 200th session (document 200 EX/13 Part I (B)).

4. Moreover, the International Conference of Non-Governmental Organizations in partnership with UNESCO, which is a statutory element of collective cooperation explicitly provided for by the Directives and a key forum for meeting and dialogue among UNESCO's official NGO partners, is also "invited to communicate collectively to the Director-General the NGOs' views and suggestions about the Draft Programme and Budget, including the guidance provided by the Executive Board" (section VII (c) of the Directives).

5. Thus, the 2016 International Conference of NGOs in partnership with UNESCO, held at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris from 12 to 14 December 2016, examined the Director-General's preliminary proposals on document 39 C/5 and, following its deliberations, approved the document entitled "Contribution of the 2016 International Conference of NGOs to the preparation of document 39 C/5", which was transmitted to the Director-General by the Chairperson of the NGO-UNESCO Liaison Committee in accordance with the Directives, and which is annexed to this document for information of the Executive Board.

ANNEX

CONTRIBUTION OF THE 2016 INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF NGOS TO THE PREPARATION OF DOCUMENT 39 C/5

(adopted on 14 December 2016)

By circular letter of 18 April 2016, the Director-General launched a consultation on the Draft Programme and Budget for 2018-2021 (39 C/5), including NGOs in official partnership with UNESCO. Some 84 replies from NGOs, foundations and other similar institutions reached the Secretariat by 20 May 2016.

In accordance with the Directives concerning UNESCO's partnership with non-governmental organizations (2011), the 2016 International Conference of NGOs is invited to submit a collective response to the Director-General.

This contribution begins with a brief summary of the NGOs' replies on the overall context of UNESCO and the evaluation of their cooperation with the Organization. It then provides some forward-looking proposals in relation to the new 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set out therein, for inclusion in document 39 C/5.

COMMENTS AND PROPOSALS BY THE NGOS FOR DOCUMENT 39 C/5

The majority of respondents considered "Intercultural dialogue, peace building and the fight against all forms of discrimination", "global citizenship education, including preventing violent extremism" and "education for sustainable development" as high priority areas.

Other themes were also highlighted, such as promoting culture and contemporary creative industries as enablers of sustainable cities, regulating new technologies and combatting discrimination and hate speech conveyed through information and communication technologies (ICTs).

With regard to targeted audiences, the majority of NGOs considered that youth should be given the highest priority. They also said that UNESCO should focus on children displaced by conflicts and disasters, early childhood, girls and women, especially mothers.

COMMENTS FROM NGOS ON THE MAJOR PROGRAMMES (BASED ON AN EVALUATION OF NGO-UNESCO COOPERATION)

Education: in their cooperation with UNESCO, NGOs have focused on adult literacy and lifelong learning, teacher training, the progression of research professors and the promotion of academics in their teaching and research occupations and access to quality education for all, gender equality and empowerment of girls and women, multilingualism, and information and communication technologies.

Natural Sciences: the NGOs mentioned their fruitful collaboration, especially with the Programme on Man and the Biosphere (MAB), the International Hydrological Programme (IHP), and in the framework of their participation at the twenty-first session of the Conference of Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP 21). They specifically mentioned the need to improve access to water in Africa and women's empowerment to monitor water resources.

Social and Human Sciences: some 64% of respondents considered their recent collaboration with UNESCO important, particularly in programmes relating to peace, intercultural dialogue, rapprochement of cultures, gender equality and women's rights.

Culture: the majority of NGOs emphasized their cooperation in protecting heritage and promoting the diversity of cultural expressions, particularly on the Internet, the need to take account of local knowledge, and combating the negative effects of modernization and the digital divide. They wished to make the digital world a place of dialogue and peace, rather than hatred and mistrust. To a lesser extent, they also cited creative cities, urban planning and the protection of cultural property in the event of armed conflict.

Communication and Information: in this field, respondents considered the results achieved through UNESCO's support moderately significant. They nonetheless cited the benefits of a world atlas of languages, media support to communities, gender equality and ethics as well as support for the independence and social responsibility of the media.

TOWARDS NGO-UNESCO COLLECTIVE COOPERATION ON DOCUMENT 39 C/5 AND THE 2030 AGENDA

The International Conference of NGOs, which met in Paris from 12 to 14 December 2016, considered that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) contained therein provided a new framework for development cooperation over the next 15 years.

The 2016 International Conference of NGOs considered the 2030 Agenda to be a universal agenda reflecting a changing world and a new appreciation for the growing complexity of development challenges. To meet those challenges, it proposed that document 39 C/5 should embed the guiding principles of the 2030 Agenda in all of its programmes.

In addition to the individual responses from NGOs, the 2016 International Conference of NGOs:

Welcomes the fact that UNESCO, as the United Nations' specialized agency for education, was entrusted to lead and coordinate the Education 2030 Agenda with its partners by setting up an inclusive global multi-stakeholder coordination mechanism dedicated to SDG 4 (education) as well as aspects relating to education in the other SDGs.

Considers that with a view to implementing the 2030 Agenda, UNESCO should play a significant role for eight SDGs: SDG 1 (poverty), SDG 5 (gender equality), SDG 6 (water), SDG 9 (scientific research), SDG 11 (cities, including targets on heritage and inclusion), SDG 13 (climate change), SDG 14 (oceans), SDG 15 (biodiversity) and SDG 16 (peaceful societies). Its commitment to achieving gender equality remains a priority for the International Conference of NGOs, which, in accordance with its missions, is committed to providing assistance through fora and major events.

Reaffirms the need to promote inclusion ("leaving no one behind") through the participation of all in the process of lifelong sustainable development. The members of the International Conference of NGOs shall strive to build inclusive knowledge societies and promote universal access to knowledge, in particular through the appropriate use of new technologies, including for disabled people, linguistic minorities, people living in remote areas and other marginalized and vulnerable social groups, which leads to the development of means to combat illiteracy. In view of the problems of inclusion arising from crises, conflicts and displacement of populations, resilience education seems to be one of the key themes in document 39 C/5. Moreover, the International Conference of NGOs stresses the urgent need to promote the implementation of effective policies to combat climate change and its effects.

Strongly emphasizes that peace, understanding between cultures, human rights and global citizenship are essential issues for UNESCO's programme, in line with SDG 16, which calls upon the international community to promote peaceful and just societies, free from fear, violence and inequalities. The International Conference of NGOs commits to support all non-governmental initiatives contributing to the promotion of education for a culture of peace and non-violence and to cultural rapprochement, through formal and non-formal education; it also commits to supporting educational programmes to promote heritage values, creativity and cultural diversity, in particular through the Creative Cities Network and the Memory of the World Programme.

Recognizes the cross-cutting importance of culture in the SDGs as a driver of sustainable development and **reaffirms** the importance of civil society's role in the protection and promotion of cultural expressions.

Also emphasizes the need to strengthen the promotion of youth participation in the forthcoming C/5 document, through the UNESCO Operational Strategy on Youth 2014-2021. The International Conference of NGOs, together with its youth-focused NGO members, is committed to providing UNESCO with its multidisciplinary expertise to provide young people with the means to engage in their societies and local communities: policy formulation and review with the participation of youth; capacity development for the transition to adulthood; civic engagement; democratic participation; social innovation; and combatting all forms of discrimination and violent extremism. The International Conference of NGOs is also committed to promoting non-formal and informal education as a means of achieving these goals.

Although sport is not the exclusive prerogative of youth, the International Conference of NGOs will encourage any initiative to promote sport for peace and development within the mandate of UNESCO's Revised International Charter of Physical Education, Physical Activity and Sport.

Also reaffirms the need to work with the Organization to make extensive use of social networks and information and communication technologies (ICTs) in order to disseminate widely UNESCO's priorities, ideals and programmes in view of the double digital divide.

Taking into account the proposal of the participants at the International Forum of NGOs in partnership with UNESCO, held in Querétaro, Mexico in November 2016, to set up an international network of young people for peace, the 2016 International Conference of NGOs intends to support and promote any initiative of that kind.

In addition, the 2016 International Conference of NGOs expressed the wish to contribute to the implementation of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) outcomes. It also expressed the hope that access to information and knowledge, distance learning, cyber science, cultural and linguistic diversity and the ethical dimensions of the information society shall be included in document 39 C/5.

Calls upon UNESCO to continue and even strengthen its cooperation with NGOs and to recognize the importance of their contribution to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.