

FIRST MEETING OF THE NGO-UNESCO LIAISON COMMITTEE (LC)

15 January 2013 (10.30am-5.30pm)

(Original: French)

Participants at the Liaison Committee meeting: Patrick Gallaud (President of the ICNGO), World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts/WAGGGS (Martine Lévy), International Council of Museums/ICOM (Lydie Spaczynski), Dhaka Ahsania Mission (Kazi Rafiku Alaml and Wolfgang Vollmann, International Federation of Coalitions for Cultural Diversity/ICCD (Diego Gradis), Sozopol Foundation/SF (Ivelina Kyutchoukova and Petya Zelenski), Forum of African Women Educationalists/FAWE (Aicha Bah Diallo), International Office of Catholic Education/IOCE (Thierry Brault), Rotary International (Cyril Noirtin).

Excused: International Council of Adult Education/ICAE (Nelida Cespedes), International Council on Education for Teaching/ICET (James O'Meara).

Participants for UNESCO: Eric Falt (Assistant Director General for External Relations and Public Information), Genc Seiti (Director of the Division for National Commissions and Civil Society), Sabina Colombo (Chief of Section, NGOs), Maria del Mar Marcos (NGO Section).

The meeting is opened at 10.30

1 Adoption of the Agenda, Presentation of Committee members

The agenda is adopted as presented.

The last minutes of the outgoing Liaison Committee cannot be submitted for approval by this Liaison Committee. It is requested that the latest LC meeting minutes be sent to members for their information.

2 Nomination of a provisional secretary for the session

Martine Lévy is named provisional secretary for the session. The decision is taken to disseminate the minutes of the Liaison Committee meetings to all NGOs official partners of UNESCO.

3 Follow-up to the International Conference of NGOs of December 2012: collaboration with the Secretariat, urgent files, JPC and working groups, fora, thematic days, report of the ICNGO.

Patrick Gallaud thanks the Secretariat for its commitment to engage and work with the Liaison Committee, and therefore with the NGOs.

Eric Falt recalls the Secretariat's commitment in an intervention which also stresses the main next steps in the collaboration between UNESCO and the NGOs, confirms the support that the Secretariat intends to bring for the collective work of the NGOs (ICNGO, LC, fora and celebration of international days), stresses the importance of visibility for

the collective work of the NGOs, and clarifies UNESCO's expectations for the putting in place of a decentralized cooperation between the NGOs on the one hand, and between the NGOs and UNESCO on the other hand, as well as the support that can be expected from the Secretariat.

A dialogue between the participants followed this intervention.

The outcome of action over time of the JPC and Working Groups was discussed. In their current form, according to some views, they no longer correspond to the objectives set in the new framework for collective collaboration between the NGOs and the Secretariat to contribute to implementation of UNESCO's program. A meeting is foreseen with the chairs of the JPCs and Working Groups on 1 February 2013.

The Collective Consultation of NGOs for EFA is a structure managed by the Education Sector.

Further, the structures for collective consultation need to be re-examined in the context of the decentralized collaboration that is henceforth foreseen.

In 2013 and 2014, there will be 4 NGO forums, of which 2 or 3 will be decentralized, on themes linked to UNESCO's program. In addition, the NGOs will be invited to celebrate United Nations international days and those of UNESCO through seminars and events to be held both at UNESCO Headquarters and in the regions.

A working group composed of Patrick Gallaud, Martine Lévy, Cyril Noirtin, Diego Gradis, will draw up a Liaison Committee strategy document for 2013-2014, which will be sent to the NGOs after consultation with other members of the LC. This strategy will provide a sort of road map for the current mandate.

Discussion concerning the fora and international days

The LC was informed about the possibility of organizing a forum in Vietnam linked to the World Heritage Committee meeting which will be held in Cambodia in the spring of 2013. The LC thanked Vietnam for this invitation but proposed that this forum be planned for autumn 2013 to allow for adequate preparation, in particular along with the NGOs and networks in the Asia and Pacific region. Its theme would be "the role of women in the struggle against poverty". The Dhaka Ahsania Mission, and particularly Kazi Rafiqui Alam and Wolfgang Vollmann, might begin preparation for this forum 2

The Sozopol Foundation extended its invitation that a forum or meeting of the LC takes place in Sozopol, Bulgaria, linked to a colloquium on education and protection of heritage. The LC thanked the Sozopol Foundation for this invitation and would like to propose that it might host a forum during 2014 on a theme to be decided. The Sozopol Foundation, and in particular, Ivelina Kyutchoukova and Petya Zelenski, might begin preparation of this forum 2

The third or fourth forum in 2014 might take place in Africa on a theme related to youth. FAWE and Aicha Bah Diallo, with WAGGGS and Martine Lévy might begin to prepare this third or fourth forum.

The first forum, which will take place in Paris, following the next session of the UNESCO Executive Board, will be devoted to means to strengthen the mobilizing capacity of NGOs (regardless of the location of their secretariats or headquarters) for collective action, at both international and regional levels in terms of the ICNGO Resolution of 2012. The International Federation of Coalitions for Cultural Diversity, and Diego Gradis in particular along with Rotary International and Cyril Noirtin, might begin to prepare this first forum.

Nelida Cespedes, of the International Council for Adult Education (ICAE) will also be consulted about the possibility of a forum taking place in the Latin America and Caribbean region, and James O'Meara of the International on Education for Teaching (ICET) is invited to respond to these proposals.

Each forum should be prepared by an ad hoc working group composed of people who find the time necessary and in association with the Secretariat, the National Commissions and UNESCO Field Offices.

Two proposed events were mentioned: "Puppets for Peace", which might be held on 21 September 2013 on International Peace Day, and "Article 31: Action for Human rights" which might be held in December 2013 on International Human Rights Day.

It would also be interesting to encourage activities in the context of International Women's Day (8 March) and International Water Day (22 March) in 2013 or 2014.

ICNGO Report 2012

Thierry Brault (IOCE) is asked to put together the documents for a report on the ICNGO 2012.

4 Liaison Committee communication: "continuous information exchange", evolution of the website, social networks.

The NGO partner website needs to be updated and re-configured, with links to the social networks and to the www.unesco.int site. Cyril Noirtin will work on it.

5 Ongoing examination of regionalization (linked with preparation of the forums)

6 Youth NGOs: What policy? What place in collective work?

7 Training for NGO representatives: where, when, and how?

Because of lack of time, the above items were not discussed. They will be examined at a later LC meeting. In the meantime, the LC bureau might make suggestions.

8 Budgetary questions

Lydie Spaczynski accepts the invitation to continue as Treasurer of the Liaison Committee. She summarized the situation and wants the 2012 accounts to be closed as soon as possible with the support of the person who, until now, has helped the LC with its accounts.

The UNESCO Secretariat reported the budgetary reductions faced by the NGO Section and emphasized that it would be easier for it to participate financially in concrete activities, which will give more visibility to the NGO collective cooperation. They further encouraged the search for external funding for the NGO collective action.

It was decided that the call for contributions from the NGOs would be sent out with the LC strategic document for the 2013-2014 biennium.

9 2013 Calendar of Liaison Committee activities

Next meeting of the LC: Tuesday, 19 March 2013 from 10.00am to 4.00pm.

In the meantime, a meeting is foreseen with the chairs of the JPC and Working Groups whose mandate has expired on Friday, 1 February 2013 at 10.00.

For information:

Spring session of the Executive Board: 10-25 April 2013; NGP Committee: 10-12 April (to be confirmed).

Autumn session of the Executive Board: 2-17 October 2013; NGP Committee: date not yet decided

10 Distribution of tasks and files

Composition of the Bureau:

Chair: Patrick Gallaud

Vice-Chair: Aicha Bah Diallo

Secretary: Martine Lévy

Treasurer: Lydie Spaczynski

Responsibilities for the forums (provisional dates)

Paris, June 2013: Diego Gradis, Cyril Noirtin

Vietnam, December 2013: Kazi Rafiqi Alam from Bangladesh, Wolfgang Vollmann from Paris

Africa 2014: Aicha Bah Diallo, Martine Levy

Sozopol, Bulgaria, 2014: Ivelina Kyutchoukova, Petya Zelenski.

ICNGO 2012 documents for the report: Thierry Brault

Youth: Martine Levy (to contact youth NGOs and the relevant UNESCO sectors)

Internet, social networks: Cyril Noirtin

11 Other questions

The question of rent-free offices in the NGO House is to be discussed at the next UNESCO Headquarters Committee meeting. Hence, it was decided that Patrick Gallaud and Lydie Spaczynski would prepare an NGO position on the questions after consulting the

principal NGOs which current have such offices and a request will be made to enable Patrick Gallaud to present it during the next meeting of the Headquarters Committee.

Before closing the session, Patrick Gallaud thanks all the participants and UNESCO Secretariat, particularly for simultaneous translation.

The meeting ended at 5.30pm.

*Martine Lévy,
3 February 2013, Secretary of the "Group of 11"*