

FOURTH MEETING OF THE NGO-UNESCO LIAISON COMMITTEE

(Original: French)

17 DECEMBER 2013 (14.00-17.00)

Present:

Patrick Gallaud (President, ICNGO)

NGO: World Association of Girl Guides and Scouts (Martine Lévy), International Council of Museums/ICOM) (Dora Eszter Peter), Dhaka Ahsania Mission (Wolfgang Vollmann), International Federation of Coalitions for Cultural Diversity/IFCCKD (Diego Gradis), Sozopol Foundation (Petya Zelenski), Forum for African Women Educationalists/FAWE (Aicha Bah Diallo), International Office of Catholic Education /IOCE (Thierry Brault), Rotary International (Cyril Noirt).

Present by audio-conference: International Council for Education on Teaching/ICET (James O'Meara), Dhaka Ahsania Mission (Kazi Rafiqui Alam).

UNESCO: Genc Seiti (Director of the Division for National Commissions and Civil Society, Sabina Colombo (Chief of Section for NGOs), Maria del Mar Marcos (Programme Specialist, ERI/NGO).

Excused:

NGO: International Council for Education Education/ICAE (Nelida Cespedes)

UNESCO: Eric Falt (Assistant Director General for External Relations and Public Information).

The Meeting was opened at 14.00

Patrick Gallaud welcomed the UNESCO representatives to the Liaison Committee.

- He thanked Mr. Falt for providing the room and simultaneous interpretation as well as the audio-conference link.
- He welcomed and thanked the members of the Liaison Committee for their attendance and presented excuses for Nelida Cespedes.
- He explained problems that had taken place at the last minute to provide video-conferencing. James O'Meara and Kazi Rafiqui Alam will participate by audio-conference without simultaneous interpretation.
- This led the secretary for the meeting to express concern regarding the notes to be taken in spite of the best of intentions.

Intervention by Genc Seiti

General Conference and "NGO space"

He expressed ERI's satisfaction after the General Conference. Major NGO participation contributed to that success.

Clearly, the “NGO space” strengthened relations between the NGOs and UNESCO, if only through better mutual knowledge of each other.
Information provided by the Chairs of the General Conference Commissions and their interaction allowed the NGOs better understanding and participation.

Changes underway at UNESCO announced by the Director-General

Mr. Seiti mentioned:

The Programme and Budget 2014-2017 (C5) was approved but with many budgetary reductions in activities and staff. The ERI Sector will be reorganized.
The NGO budget and that of the Participation Programme remain similar to the ones for 2012-2013.

Ongoing challenges

Mr. Seiti thanked the Liaison Committee for the work accomplished during the past year and recalled the ongoing challenges:

3 Forums

International Days

The International Conference of NGOs

Agenda

The report of the meeting of 23 September 2013 was approved by email. It is therefore adopted but it was requested that an addition be made concerning the Working Group on the Directives.

1.Results of the General Conference 2013 and the “NGO Space”

Many informal meetings between Member States, NGOs, UNESCO.

The Chairs and Secretaries of General Conference Commissions presented and invited the NGOs to participate.

Many NGOs presented their own work and activities.

The Forums and International Days were presented.

NGOs took the floor in Plenary.

The President of the International conference of NGOs intervened in Plenary on the Liaison Committee policy and strategy.

It was suggested that Member States could be invited to meet the NGO representatives at the next UNESCO General Conference.

General satisfaction and thanks were conveyed to ERI, to Mme. Colombo and to those who work with her, as well as to Patrick Gallaud for this excellent initiative.

2.December 2012-2013: Results of a year of Liaison Committee action

Work

What has been accomplished:

The modification of working methods after a period of adaption functions well overall, on the understanding that once an event is over (with the exception of its follow-up), the preparatory group is disbanded.

Initiatives taken over the past year give NGOs real credibility.

The new structure of the Liaison Committee has changed the nature of the Committee whose members meet less regularly, making things more difficult. Responsibilities are more concentrated with the President than previously.

The return of the Committee to the Coordinating Group of the CCNGO/EFA is very important and the Liaison Committee has a real role to play to work with UNESCO in the coordination and follow-up of the work plan and activities of the CCNGO/EFA.

What remains to do:

Inform the NGOs which may not be aware about the Collective Consultation of NGOs. The challenge is important and concerns all NGOs, and not only those linked to the Education Sector, with the objectives to provide a quality basic education not only for children, but also for youth and adults based on an agenda that goes well beyond 2015.

Integrated in the new NGO working groups

Follow-up of Forums: reflection on future work:

Work closely with the NGOs in regions or countries where the Forums will take place (example of the meeting organized in cote d'Ivoire);

Think about the financial issues.

Change the NGO image

What has been done:

NGO space at the General Conference;

New communication policy: brochures on the Strategy which were very successful, renewed more modern and interactive website and Facebook page;

International days notably the one on 6 March, will contribute to giving an improved image.

What remains to be done:

Edit a new brochure presenting the Liaison Committee

Become better known to the Member States

Relations with UNESCO

What has been done:

Work with UNESCO for the preparation of Forums and International Days.

International Conference of NGOs: December 2014

What remains to do:

The President invited the Committee members to formulate innovative proposals for this Conference, with respect to choice of themes as well as general organization. The item will be on the agenda of the next meeting.

3.State of preparation of Forums 2,3,4

Forum 2

In Asia: “Role of women in the struggle against poverty”

The first meeting of the Preparatory Group took place on 16 December

Place: China or UNESCO Paris

Date: End of May 2014

Forum 3

In Africa: (Cote d’Ivoire)

The Preparatory Group is continuing work

Mr. Falt and the President of the Liaison Committee sent a letter to the Minister of Education of the Cote d’Ivoire.

Dates: 29-31 July.

Forum 4

In Bulgaria

Question from Diego Gradis, Co-Leader: “Who is welcome at the Forums, all international NGOs and their national sections or all local and national NGOs that are not necessarily UNESCO partners?”

Some clarifications:

The Directives refer to forums of NGOs in cooperation with UNESCO.

The host country must ensure the expenses for 100 participants, maybe more.

How shall the 100 participants be selected? Which criteria, the first registered for example? (Agenda item at the next Committee meeting.)

Sozopol Foundation:

Excellent cooperation;

First meeting of the Preparatory Group on 8 January: 16 NGOs (23 people) registered;

A provisional programme was proposed by the Liaison Committee and the Sozopol Foundation.

Dates: 27 September – 1 October 2014.

4.State of preparation of the International Days (Human Rights, Literacy, Peace, Migrants)

Human Rights

Event in Room I on 6 March 2014;

“Education, Sport, cultural Diversity: New attitudes to promote human Rights in the World”;

The Director-General of UNESCO may participate in the opening session. Registration online is open, accompanied by a Facebook page.

Literacy

Celebration foreseen in September 2014.

Clarifications by Sabina Colombo;

- The ERI Sector is there to facilitate preparation;
- The Group is asking for meetings that are a bit premature.

Peace

Celebration planned for September or October 2014.

The programme was revised to include a round table, marionettes and a concert.

The Committee will meet with Michel Thouzeau, Leader, in January 2014.

Migrants

Celebration planned for November 2014

After meeting representatives from the SHS Sector and ERI, the Group is continuing its preparations for a Day to be celebrated around the world as well as at UNESCO Headquarters and in the regions.

5. Follow-up to the Youth Forum 2013, notably the resolution concerning The Liaison Committee

“Youth call for greater cooperation with the Youth NGOs”.

They want a mechanism to be put in place on the model of the Collective Consultation of NGOs for Education for All (EFA

6. International Conference of NGOs 2014: first thoughts

This question was raised (see Item 2 of this report).

7. Working Group on Evaluation of the implementation of the 2011 Directives

This item is placed on the agenda of the next meeting.

8. Update on 2013 contributions, amount of 2014 contribution 2013:

78 NGOs paid their contribution, totaling approximately 10,000 euros received the Liaison Committee (the budget had foreseen 15,000 euros).

Impossibility to send reminders to the NGOs, which have not paid because the database at UNESCO is global.

It would be necessary to create a database for the Liaison Committee so that individual reminders could be sent.

Sabina Columba clarified that the database and a mailing list are two different things. Since the list is global, it is currently impossible to send targeted reminders.

2014

At the beginning of January, there will be a more precise account of expenditures

Amount of the contribution:

- Expenditures in 2014 will be higher.
- Should the contribution be raised?
- For that purpose, it would be good to look for more NGOs.
- It should be remembered that the contribution is voluntary.

- A reminder will be made at the beginning of 2014.

Problem with bank costs: Given the information available for earlier periods, it is very difficult to establish comparative costs by the nature of expenditure. A comparative accounting system is now being carried out in order to enable comparison for the future.

9.Miscellaneous items

CCNGO/EFA

Sabine Detzel is the focal point for the CCNGO/EFA for the NGOs

The follow-up to the September 2013 Forum is underway.

There will be regional consultations (Africa, Asia, Europe-North America).

May 2014: CCNGO/EFA I Chile

NGOs need to be mobilized for the Forum in Korea in 2015.

The next meeting of the Liaison Committee will take place Wednesday 19 February, from 10.00 to 17.00 at UNESCO Headquarters, Paris.