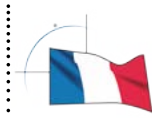




Organisation
des Nations Unies
pour l'éducation,
la science et la culture



Commission
nationale française
pour l'UNESCO



ROLE AND MISSIONS

OF NATIONAL COMMISSIONS
FOR UNESCO

FOREWORD

UNESCO will celebrate its 75th anniversary in 2020. In view of this milestone, the Member States, the governing bodies and the Director-General have wished for a strategic and in-depth transformation of the Organization in order to enable it to respond more effectively to the new challenges of the 21st century, especially as this effort is in line with the preparation of UNESCO's next medium-term strategy for 2022-2029 (41 C/4) and the remaining decade for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals defined by the United Nations for 2030. The National Commissions for UNESCO, interface between the Member States, the Secretariat, the field units and various partners of civil society, in accordance with the mandate entrusted to them by article VII of Unesco's Constitution, are called upon to play an essential role in this context, in order to support and ensure the success of this major ongoing reform.

It is in this context that the French National Commission for UNESCO (CNFU) has proposed to draw up an inventory of the role and the various responsibilities incumbent on a National Commission, in order to better understand its added value in support of UNESCO's actions and to identify, where appropriate, possible improvements in this regard for the benefit of the whole network.

Thus, the primary objective of this census is to contribute to strengthening the capacities of National Commissions at this important reform phase. It will highlight their workload, the sharing of responsibilities in certain cases with the Secretariat. It also aims to raise awareness and visibility of the work of a National Commission among ministries, concerned public supervisory authorities, civil society actors, the general public and potential partners interested in the activities of the Organization.

This inventory is presented around the main lines of responsibility of a National Commission (liaison, coordination, consultation, representation, execution and information) and is based on the various existing normative texts and regulations in force (Unesco Constitution, resolutions of the General Conference, decisions of the Executive Board, charter of National Commissions for UNESCO, reference documents of the Secretariat such as annual activity reports, practical guides, document on the architecture of National Commissions, administrative manual, etc.).

It should be noted that this document produced in close consultation with the Secretariat, in no way claims to be exhaustive and, on the contrary, is intended to be evolving, being called upon to be complemented and improved thereafter, according to new decisions by the governing bodies and the Secretariat which would be taken in this area, as part of the ongoing reform. It is therefore essentially indicative and

is not intended either to serve as a regulatory framework, nor to be a fixed model, each national commission being governed by sovereign considerations. Finally, this vademecum can serve as a starting point for comparison in order to integrate good practices from National Commissions around the world.

This inventory will also serve to launch, in partnership with the German Commission for UNESCO, a series of thematic brochures focused on specific aspects of the work of National Commissions, and all other commissions wishing to join this project are most welcome. We wish to particularly commend here the German Commission for our fruitful partnership on the planned series of brochures and for its constant and unswerving support towards this project.

This considerable work could not have been possible without the many useful contributions received from other Commissions throughout the world, following a large regional and interregional consultation process carried out over more than a year. Our gratitude therefore goes to all the National Commissions which provided us with their valuable comments. We also wish to thank the Commissions which have decided to support the translation of this document, being released initially in English and French, into other languages, thus ensuring its larger distribution.

Finally, we warmly thank the Secretariat of UNESCO, notably the Sector for Priority Africa and External Relations (PAX), for its strong support in achieving this exemplary partnership, without which it wouldn't have been possible.

The success of this collective effort will further strengthen the great solidarity which prevails in our large "family" of National Commissions and, thereby, help to increase the prestige of UNESCO on the eve of its 75th anniversary.



Yves Saint-Geours,
Président CNFU



Alexandre Navarro,
Secretary - General

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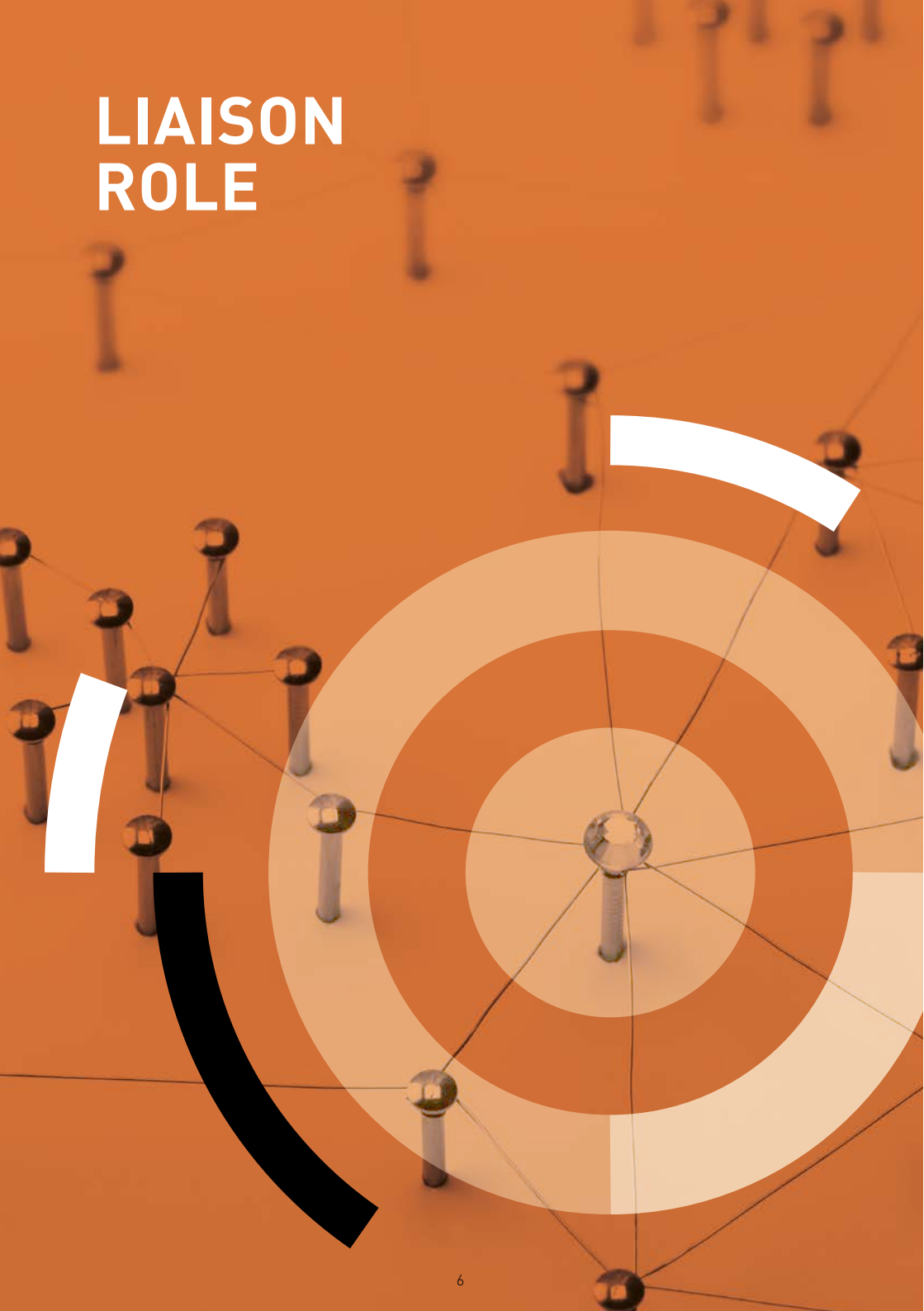
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LIAISON ROLE



National Commissions liaise with the following entities interested in the work of UNESCO:



With Member States:

- Encourage, at the national level, interdisciplinary dialogue and cooperation between institutions concerned with education, science, culture and information, with the aim of channelling intellectual and other resources to support policy agendas, international cooperation, and various programmes of UNESCO.
- Contribute to a better understanding and ownership by relevant leaders and actors of the statutes and mandate of UNESCO within the family of the United Nations system.
- National Commissions may bring together several line ministries (or public entities) into committees and/or advisory groups. Thus, they may encourage, at the national level, intersectoral policy dialogue and cooperation between line ministries as well as with other institutions and intellectual resources.
- They may be associated with or integrated into one line ministry of the governments of their Member States. They may advise the Minister and the Ministry on all subjects concerning UNESCO and its programs, their implementation at the national level and on participation in programs.
- Due to the wide mandate of UNESCO, National Commissions also typically liaise and advise other line ministries individually on relevant subjects concerning UNESCO and its programs and encourage participation in programs.



With Permanent Delegations of Member States:

- Co-operate with Permanent Delegations to UNESCO.
- Participate in sessions of the governing bodies within the delegations of their Member States, playing necessary advisory roles, as relevant.
- When required, collect information at national level from institutions and experts in order to advise the delegations.



With National Commission networks:

- Collaborate with other National Commissions in fostering regional, subregional, interregional and bilateral co-operation in education, the sciences, culture and information and communication. This co-operation may bear upon the preparation, implementation and evaluation of projects and may take the form of joint surveys, seminars, meetings and conferences and exchanges of information, material and visits.
- Develop joint regional or sub-regional projects under the Participation Program.
- Develop co-operation and networking among National Commissions, with a view to improving subregional and interregional co-operation in UNESCO's fields of competence and assist newly established or restructured National Commissions in their development.
- Establish and maintain various types of networks, linkages and partnerships among National Commissions (e.g., Francophone National Commissions, East African National Commissions, European informal network of National Commissions, etc.).
- Maintain relations with other National Commissions and with other sub-regional, regional and inter-regional National Commission networks.



With Field Offices:

- As concerns the interaction with Field Offices, where they exist, rely upon the "Guidelines for Interface and Cooperation between UNESCO Field Offices and National Commissions for UNESCO".
- They have mutual responsibilities as regards exchange of information, bilateral consultations, participation in events, consultation for C/4 and C/5 documents, country-level and subregional consultations, and partnerships.

With category 1 Centres and Institutes:

- Develop cooperation with category 1 centres and institutes.
- *Description of entity:* Category 1 centres and institutes are an integral part of the UNESCO programme, supporting research and institutional capacity-building in Member States.

With Category 2 Centres and Institutes:

- National Commissions can facilitate the process of identification and establishment of category 2 centres and institutes, contribute to their full engagement in support of UNESCO's programme and their regular reporting and liaison with UNESCO Secretariat, including the Field Offices.
- Support coordination of the network of Category 2 Centres in respective countries to ensure they remain engaged and relevant to UNESCO's values.
- *Description of entity:* Category 2 Centres and institutes, under the auspices of UNESCO, are established and funded by Member States to contribute to the achievement of UNESCO's objectives. They provide technical support to Member States and other partners in their specialized fields.

With national NGOs and civil society actors:

- Liaise with non-governmental partners and civil society in projects in line with UNESCO values and cooperate with them to promote the Organization's goals at national level.
- Facilitate UNESCO's outreach to relevant non-governmental partners and civil society. Encourage their participation, as appropriate, in the formulation and execution of UNESCO's programmes.
- Support UNESCO's partnership with relevant NGOs by identifying and assisting new interested non-governmental partners to become aware of and consider association with the NGO network in formal partnership with UNESCO.
- UNESCO's current statutory framework for cooperation with NGOs is defined in the new "*Directives concerning UNESCO's partnership with NGOs*", adopted by the General Conference at its 36th session (36 C/Res.108) : Two categories of partnership may be established with NGOs: consultative partnership (designed to enable UNESCO to establish and maintain flexible and dynamic partnerships with any organization of civil society that is active in UNESCO's fields of competence

at whatever level) and associate partnership (open to international or regional organizations having maintained a continuous and effective partnership with UNESCO for at least two years). Relevant National Commissions for UNESCO are consulted during the admission process, particularly when the request concerns a national or local NGO. Cooperation at country level is conducted in consultation and/or in partnership with the National Commission for UNESCO concerned.

Mobilization of youth:

- Encourage good practices of youth participation in association with UNESCO.
- Promote youth initiatives and youth representatives in liaison with UNESCO.

With the private sector and foundations:

- Develop partnerships in accordance with the rules and decisions of UNESCO governing bodies in this area, and in conformity with the mandate and roles of each National Commission.
- As appropriate, strengthen UNESCO's visibility to create opportunities for resource mobilization from relevant actors.
- Before contracting with a private sector partner, the UNESCO Secretariat informs the National Commission (where that private sector partner is registered or resides in the case of an individual), of the potential engagement, requesting whether it has an objection to the potential engagement (for engagements with Private Sector Companies/Foundation and for Financial Contributions over \$10,000 for individuals).

With Goodwill Ambassadors:

- Work closely with these personalities to enhance the visibility, credibility and effectiveness of UNESCO.
- *Description of entity:* Goodwill Ambassadors are personalities who put their national and/or international fame in the service of UNESCO ideals. National Commissions should be informed of these designations.



With institutions concerned with education, science, culture and information:

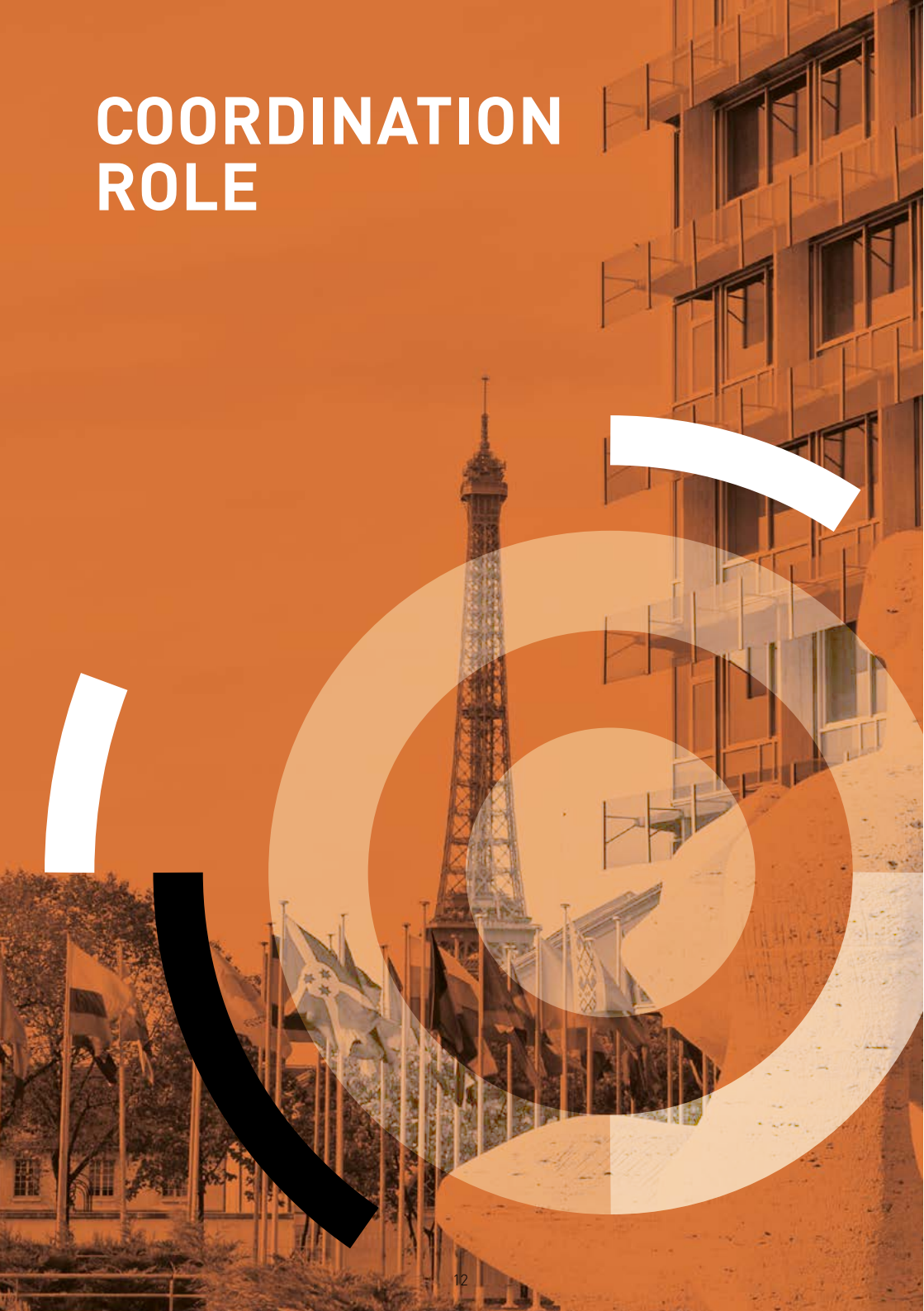
- Encourage, at the national level, interdisciplinary dialogue and cooperation between relevant institutions with the aim of strengthening their capacities, mobilizing their assistance and supporting UNESCO's programmes and activities.



With international cooperation actors:

- Monitor the development of UNESCO's programmes and draw the attention of relevant national partners to UNESCO's programme priorities, advocate and support resource mobilization and development of new funding modalities.
- Where appropriate, contribute, through national mechanisms, to the development and implementation at the national level of UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF).
- Support UNESCO positioning, through national mechanisms, in UNSDCF and other UN joint programming initiatives (this is of particular importance in countries where UNESCO is a non-resident agency).
- Maintain a flow of information with UNESCO as regards national initiatives and priorities of Member States relevant to UNESCO programmes.

COORDINATION ROLE



National commissions ensure the coordination of multiple national networks:

UNESCO Associated Schools Network (ASPnet):

- Appoint an ASPnet National Coordinator to the UNESCO Associated Schools Network (ASPnet) and provide him/her with regular guidance and assistance (UNESCO Associated Schools Network: guide for national coordinators).
- Ensure that the ASPnet schools keep to UNESCO's ideals and that its name is not used to promote activities not in line with the Organization.
- Facilitate ASPnet networking at both regional and international levels.
- *Description of Network:* UNESCO Associated Schools promote the ideals and values of UNESCO by reinforcing the humanistic, ethical, cultural and international dimensions of education, collaborating across borders to achieve SDG 4. ASPnet is a network of committed schools (ranging from pre-schools and primary to secondary schools and teacher training institutions) engaged in fostering and delivering quality education in pursuit of peace, liberty, justice and human development in order to meet the pressing educational needs of children and young people throughout the world. ASPnet operates on four levels i.e. school, national, regional and international and the network benefits from support from National Commissions for UNESCO, Ministries of Education, UNESCO Field Offices and UNESCO Institutes.

UNITWIN/UNESCO Chairs Programme:

- Support higher-education institutions to prepare their applications for the establishment of UNESCO Chair or UNITWIN Cooperation Programme and ensure that proposals meet eligibility criteria. The applications must be reviewed and endorsed by the National Commission of the country hosting the institution in order to be evaluated by the Secretariat (UNITWIN/UNESCO Chairs Programme: guidelines and procedures).
- Facilitate networking, sharing of information and good practices among Chairs established in the country, and help make available information on the activities carried out by the UNESCO Chairs/networks to the national, regional and global levels.

- National Commissions can organize meetings of network to exchange ideas, support and advise their activities to promote the values of UNESCO.
- National Commissions can contribute to programme evaluations their own perspective on the Chairs' relevance, activities, development prospects and impact.

Associations and Clubs for UNESCO:

- Ensure the direct oversight of these entities and their adherence to the provisions of the Regulatory Framework regarding Associations and Clubs for UNESCO.
- Accredite, supervise, assess, and, if necessary, remove accreditation from Associations and Clubs for UNESCO.
- Provide supervision for the work of the National Federation of Associations and Clubs for UNESCO, if it exists.
- Ensure that Associations' and Clubs' goals and activities are inspired by UNESCO's current strategic objectives and programmatic priorities and monitor the proper use of UNESCO's name, acronym and logo.
- Encourage cooperation with Associations and Clubs for UNESCO at the national, regional and international level.
- *Description of Programme:* Clubs for UNESCO are non-profit bodies which work on a voluntary basis and are legally and financially independent from UNESCO. Clubs share a commitment to UNESCO's ideals and assist in their realization at the grassroots level.

National Committees of UNESCO intergovernmental programmes:

- Coordinate, encourage and support the creation of national committees of UNESCO intergovernmental programs according to the priorities of their Member States, such as: World Heritage, Intangible Cultural Heritage, Memory of the World, Man and Biosphere (MAB), Global Geoparks, Management of Social Transformations (MOST), the International Bioethics Committee (IBC), The Intergovernmental Bioethics Committee (IGBC), the International Program for the Development of Communication (IPDC), the International Hydrological Program (IHP), etc.
- Encourage and support the participation of relevant local governments and institutions, NGOs, and experts in the intergovernmental programs.
- World Heritage Sites: While the 1972 convention and its Operational Guidelines list only very few specific roles and responsibilities, many National Commissions have been deeply involved into the work, for example in establishing national

associations of World Heritage site managers, promoting their World Heritage sites, convening expert commissions etc.

- Intangible Cultural Heritage: While the 2003 convention does not list specific roles and responsibilities, many National Commissions have been deeply involved into the work, including the establishment of National Registries of Intangible Cultural Heritage or instituting national expert committees.
- Memory of the World: In countries without a national Memory of the World committee, the National Commission for UNESCO may itself choose to exercise the equivalent functions and responsibilities, including maintenance of the national register, but will encourage the creation of a discrete national committee as soon as practicable (Memory of the World: General Guidelines to Safeguard Documentary Heritage).
- UNESCO Biosphere Reserves: The Lima Action Plan for UNESCO's "Man and the Biosphere" (MAB) Programme lists 21 (co-)responsibilities of National Commissions, including ensuring that each MAB national committee has a transdisciplinary and representative composition, ensuring the active participation of at least one representative of each ICC Member State at each MAB ICC session, undertaking an analysis of a strengthened global biosphere reserves brand, and establishing this with associated national guidelines, etc.
- UNESCO Global Geoparks: The Statutes of the International Geosciences and Geoparks Programme (IGGP) lists 6 roles of National Commissions, including setting up National Geoparks Committees.

Creative Cities Network:

- Provide a letter of support to the candidate cities to the Creative Cities Network and to the candidate member cities to host the Annual Conference of UNESCO Creative Cities.
- Encourage and support activities of local governments and communities to be in line with the goals of the program.
- *Description of network:* The creative cities that currently form this UNESCO network work together towards a common objective: to place creativity and cultural industries at the heart of their development plans at the local level and to actively cooperate at the international level.



UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities (GNLC):

- Endorse applications from up to three cities per country per year to become members of UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities
- Encourage and support activities of local governments and communities to be in line with the goals of the program.
- *Description of network:* A “learning city” is a city that mobilizes its resources to ensure quality lifelong learning for its citizens, from basic to higher education, as well as informal education. This network should encourage the sharing of experiences, good practices, the pooling of expertise and the emergence of innovative strategies.



International Coalition of Inclusive and Sustainable Cities (ICCAR):

- Encourage and support the activities of the Coalition.
- *Description of network:* Member cities of ICCAR advocate for solidarity and collaboration at both local and global levels. Their common objective is to promote urban development free from all forms of discrimination, through inclusive policies, capacity-building and awareness-raising.



Surveys and statistics:

- Respond to or transmit the survey inquiries requested by the Organization to the competent authorities.



CONSULTATION ROLE

The National Commissions have a consultation role with regards to:

The Medium-Term Strategy (draft C/4) and the Programme and Budget of the Organization (draft C/5):

- Participate in consultations at regional, sub-regional and interregional levels concerning the preparation of C/4 and C/5 documents.
- As part of broader consultations on C/4 and C/5 documents, conduct consultations in their respective countries by engaging with a diversity of partners and stakeholders associated with the work of the National Commission and UNESCO.

Implementation of standard-setting instruments:

- Participate, as relevant, in the preparation, implementation and monitoring of the Organization's international standard-setting instruments.
- If pertinent, encourage governments to accede to and implement UNESCO conventions as well as General Conference recommendations and declarations.
- Encourage their countries' participation in consultations on these standard-setting instruments.
- Consult with relevant partners and stakeholders in their respective countries when reporting on the national implementation of these standard-setting instruments

Evaluations of intergovernmental programmes at the national level:

- Contribute to consultations on relevant intergovernmental programmes at national level.



National consultations for the General Conference, the Executive Board and other intergovernmental meetings:

- As relevant, assist with the respective government delegations to the General Conference, the Executive Board and other intergovernmental meetings organized by UNESCO, preparing contributions to the work of these meetings.
- Depending on the arrangements made by each Member State, inform national agencies and institutions of the conclusions and recommendations adopted by the General Conference or by other meetings, or included in studies and reports; encourage their discussion in the light of national needs and priorities; and provide for such follow-up activities as may be required.



Authorization on the use of UNESCO's logo at national level:

- Monitor and protect the use at the national level of the name, acronym, logo and Internet domain names of UNESCO, in accordance with national laws.
- Authorize such use in the form of a linked logo (associating UNESCO's logo with their own), in the framework of patronage and contractual arrangements, in accordance with UNESCO's guidelines and official graphic charter.
- National Commissions may grant their own patronage to national activities by authorizing organizations working in UNESCO's fields of competence to use UNESCO's name, acronym and/or logo always in association with the National Commission's own name and, if they so desire, their own logo.
- Establish and/or expand the network of partners in their countries and seek, as relevant, sponsorship in accordance with the principles and procedures based on national legislation and UNESCO's comprehensive partnership strategy.



UNESCO Prizes:

- Propose candidates for UNESCO Prizes to the Secretariat, following a call for interest launched by the Secretariat.



International Days, Years and Decades:

- Organize national events to celebrate international days, years and decades proclaimed by the United Nations, in association with UNESCO.



Celebration of Anniversaries:

- Inform the Secretariat of national commemorations with which it wishes to associate UNESCO, organize and promote these events at the national level in coordination with UNESCO Field Offices (where applicable), and support the preparation of activity reports.



Participation programme:

- Submit projects in accordance with the resolution of the Participation Programme adopted by the General Conference.
- Coordinate and monitor projects with the national institutions concerned by endorsing and submitting the financial reports of the completed projects to the Secretariat by the required deadline.
- Approach the Field Offices (where applicable) for technical support in preparing applications and reports under the Participation Program and Emergency Assistance, if needed.



Fellowships Programmes:

- Disseminate information on the scholarship program and encourage possible applications in accordance with the principle of equal access to education.
- Forward selected applications to UNESCO Secretariat for consideration, and ensure that scholarships are well received.



The Young Professionals Program and Associated Experts Scheme:

- At the request of UNESCO's Bureau of Human Resources Management, disseminate information about a call for applications to the programme, pre-select candidates and make recommendations to UNESCO.



Citizen polls and consultations:

- National Commissions can launch and support awareness-raising and citizen participation campaigns (debates, participatory financing, volunteering, surveys and questionnaires, etc.)



Extra-budgetary funds:

- Support UNESCO in identifying country needs and potential national or regional projects, and facilitate their implementation, as relevant.
- Pursuant to mandate and functions, seek support from potential donors at the national level for their own activities and, where appropriate, for supporting Field Office initiatives in this respect.
- National Commissions may have a role with the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) roll out, to help position UNESCO stronger in UN country team plans.
- When it comes to funding National Commissions may have a key role in helping to position UNESCO vis-a-vis donors, funding opportunities, and funding initiatives (e.g. peace fund, SDG fund, etc.).



Candidates for UNESCO positions:

- Widely distribute job vacancies for UNESCO positions through their networks.



قوله تعالى: ﴿لَقَدْ كَفَرَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِذْ أَخْرَجْنَا النَّبِيَّ مِنْ بَلَدِهِمْ فَأَخْرَجْنَا أَسْرَدًا مِمَّا جَاءُوكَ قُلُوبًا غَافِقِينَ﴾

«Les guerres prennent naissance dans l'orgueil des hommes, dont l'orgueil est la cause première et la dernière. Les guerres sont le résultat de l'orgueil des hommes, dont l'orgueil est la cause première et la dernière.»

«The wars are born of the pride of men, whose pride is the first and last cause of them. The wars are the result of the pride of men, whose pride is the first and last cause of them.»

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REPRESENTATIVE AND EXECUTIVE ROLE



National Commissions play representative and implementation roles by:

Participating in sessions of governing bodies among official delegations, in subsidiary bodies and intergovernmental committees:

- Cooperate with the delegations of their respective governments at the General Conference and at other UNESCO intergovernmental meetings, inter alia, by helping to prepare the contribution of their governments to the work of these meetings.
- If mandated, they can support the preparation of Permanent Delegations (in cooperation with the relevant lead ministry and other line ministries) for relevant sessions of governing bodies and intergovernmental / international committees as well as for intergovernmental / international conferences, possibly also involving the voice of institutions, NGOs, civil society and intellectual resources. Their participation within the Delegations of Member States in such sessions of governing bodies, programmes and conferences may help to support intellectual and expert contributions – and it may also help to feedback results back into the wider national community.

Organizing conferences, roundtable discussion, and thematic events:

- Organize conferences, roundtable discussions or other thematic events relevant to UNESCO's fields of competence. In doing so, the host National Commission may make the necessary logistical arrangements , produce working documents and minutes in relevant languages, and share the outcome documents with UNESCO, as appropriate.

Sponsorship:

- In the execution of its missions, the National Commission may work with various partners whose contribution can range from a financial patronage to an expertise sponsorship.

INFORMATION ROLE



The National Commissions have the task of disseminating information on:

Periodic activity report of National Commission:

- In order to better understand the diversity and complexity of the National Commission's work, each Commission is encouraged to provide a periodic activity report to the UNESCO Secretariat.

National Commission Publications:

- National Commissions may be the source of publications, individual or collective, on educational, scientific, artistic or cultural subjects, if relevant in collaboration with UNESCO.
- National Commissions can be consulted on the publication of books.

Translation of UNESCO documents into national languages:

- Serve as intermediaries for the dissemination of information, publications and documents relating to UNESCO, supporting also their translation into national languages.
- They promote UNESCO publications and periodicals and may participate in the translation of the UNESCO Courier.

The development of a website:

- Submit in timely manner relevant information, newsletter, activity reports and proposals to support the Secretariat's work.

Contribute to the development of UNESCO Country Programme Documents (UCPD):

- Contribute, where appropriate, to the development of the UNESCO Country Programming Document. (Country profiles)

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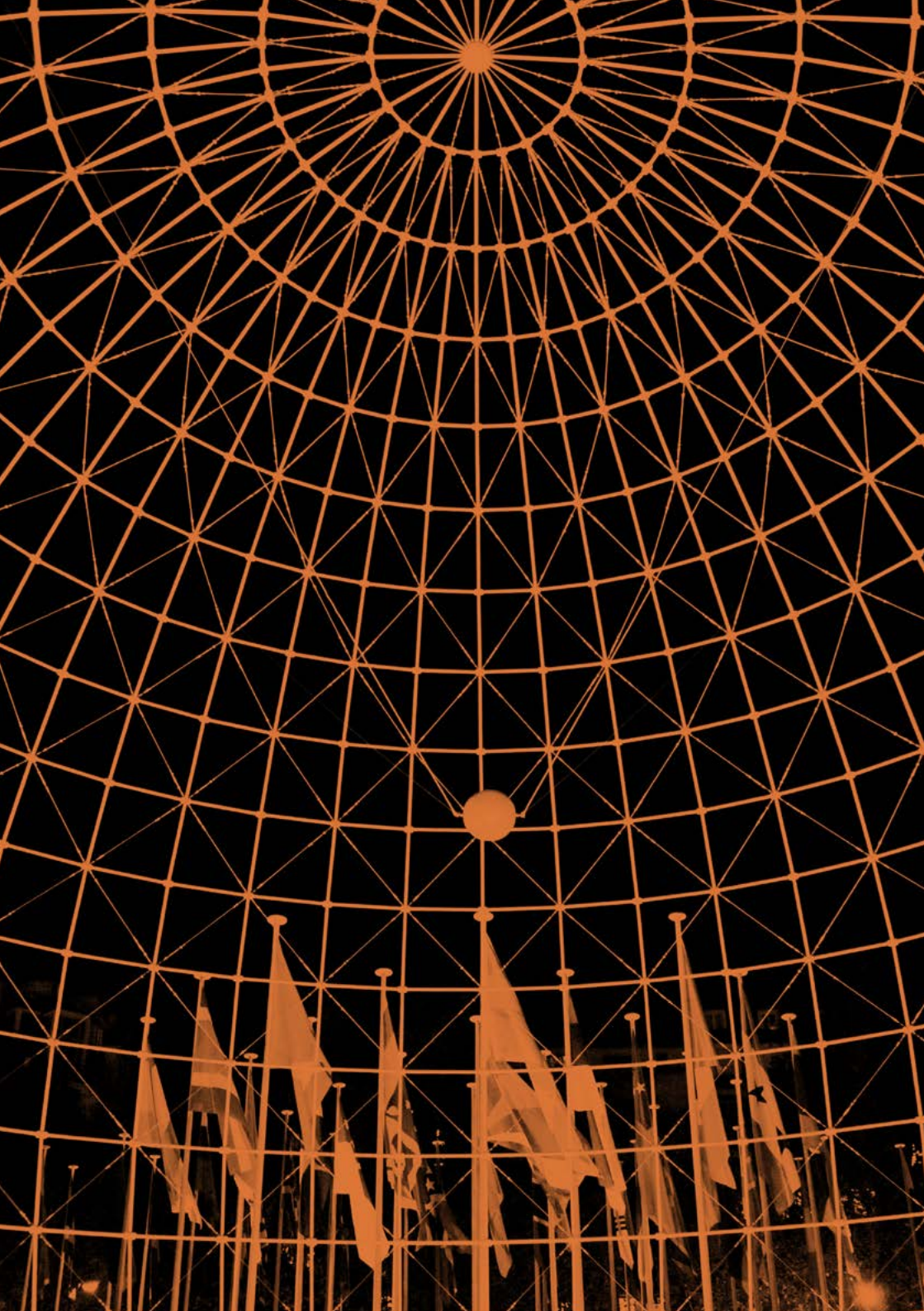
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Cultural Organization

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National Commissions website

<http://www.unesco.org/en/national-commissions>

National Commissions Platform

<https://unesco.sharepoint.com/sites/natcom/en-US/Pages/default.aspx>