



**Extraordinary Session of the Executive Board of the
World Federation of UNESCO Clubs, Centres and
Associations (WFUCA)**

Paris, France – 12 August 2019

DRAFT REPORT

The Extraordinary Session of WFUCA Executive Board was held in WFUCA Office Paris, France, on 12 August 2019.

Executive Board Members Present:

Mr. Dhirendra Bhatnagar, President / India
Ms. Sunjoo Lee, on behalf of Mr. Yoo Jay-Kun, Vice-President for Asia Pacific region / Republic of Korea
Ms. Mané Fall, Treasurer / Senegal
Ms. Sabina Akzharova, Member for Asia Pacific region / Kazakhstan
Mr. Ioannis Maronitis, Member for Europe and North America region / Greece
Mr. Yanqing Tan, Ex-officio Member / China
Ms. Yulia Averina, Ex-officio Member / Russian Federation
Mr. Tran Van Manh, Ex-officio Member / Vietnam

Secretariat:

Mr. Liangeng Dong, Office Secretary

Observer:

Ms. Ling Chen, National Federation / China
Mr. Nguyen Hung Son, Ex-officio Member / Vietnam
Mr. Pham Huu Quang, Ex-officio Member / Vietnam

Excused:

Ms. Alice Midibahaye Soulama, Vice-President for Africa region / Burkina Faso
Mr. Mustapha Badreddine, Vice-President for Arab States Region / Lebanon
Mr. Dzmitry Subtselny, Vice-President for Europe and North America region / Belarus
Mr. Enrique Renteria Castro, Vice-President, Latin America and the Caribbean region / Mexico
Mr. Elat Sylvere, Member for Africa region / Cameroon
Mr. Mokhtar Farhat, Member for Arab States region / Tunisia
Mr. Luis Otavio Palhari, Member for Latin America and the Caribbean region / Brazil
Ms. Maria Paola Azzario, Ex-officio Member / Italy
Mr. Yuji Suzuki, Ex-officio Member / Japan

Ms. Maria Paola Azzario (Italy), Mr. Enrique Renteria Castro (Mexico) and Mr. Elat Sylvere (Cameroon) initially confirmed their participation, but could not join the meeting due to exigencies.

Since there was no quorum, the meeting was adjourned and it was reconvened after 15 minutes.

AGENDA

- Item 01: Welcome statement by President of WFUCA
- Item 02: Adoption of the Report of the 39th Session of the Executive Board of WFUCA
- Item 03: Implementation of the “Regulatory Framework” regarding Associations and Clubs for UNESCO adopted by the General Conference of UNESCO in 2017
- Item 04: Adoption of the amendments to WFUCA Constitution
- Item 05: Preparation work for the 10th WFUCA World Congress
- Item 06: Financial Matters: Report of the Treasurer & approval thereof
- Item 07: Participation of WFUCA delegation in the 40th General Conference of UNESCO, 12-27 November 2019
- Item 08: Any other business

MINUTES OF THE MEETING:

Item 01: Welcome statement

Mr. Dharendra Bhatnagar welcomed all Executive Board members present in the meeting and introduced all participants.

Mr. Dharendra Bhatnagar then proceed with the presentation of agenda of the Extraordinary Session of WFUCA EXB meeting and invited suggestions for amendments. The agenda was adopted without any amendments.

The President then introduced the background of organizing this Extraordinary EXB meeting.

He recalled the decision of last EXB meeting held in Greece in June 2018, regarding organization of the 10th WFUCA World Congress in UNESCO Headquarters in Paris immediately after the UNESCO's 40th General Conference so that there will be an opportunity to invite UNESCO high-level officials to participate in the Congress and for the convenience of the members to participate in the congress. He reported that the Secretariat had sent a request to the concerned office in UNESCO in April 2019 requesting for a suitable venue for WFUCA Congress on the decided dates i.e. 28-30 November 2019. However, till this date of the EB meeting, room in UNESCO Headquarters has not been allotted.

He also shared the information of UNESCO's institutional reforms happened since the last General Conference. The Sector for External Relations and Public Information (ERI) was dissolved and a new Sector was created named Priority Africa and External Relations (PAX/UNESCO), in which Mr. Genc Seiti, Director of Division

for External Relations and Ms. Emiko de Marmier-Murai are responsible for UNESCO Clubs related matters.

He recalled the “Regulatory Framework regarding Associations and Clubs for UNESCO” which was discussed and adopted by UNESCO General Conference in 2017. According to the “Records of the General Conference, 39th session”, the implementation of the “Regulatory Framework” will be reported to the EXB of UNESCO at its 207th session (scheduled to be held from 9-23 October 2019). He also reported to the members that there were two meetings initiated by European National Commissions in the first half of this year regarding UNESCO Clubs activities and the implementation of the “Regulatory Framework” in Europe.

It is in this connection that he visited UNESCO Headquarters during 25-28 June 2019 and had meetings with the officials of the PAX Sector. At these meetings, he introduced the actions undertaken by WFUCA to encourage and guide members to implement the “Regulatory Framework”, as well as the progress on the amendment of WFUCA Constitution. He also expressed his concerns on not being allotted the venue in UNESCO Headquarters on the proposed dates for the WFUCA World Congress, though requested as early as April 2019.

In the meeting, Mr. Genc Seiti appreciated the actions by WFUCA to streamline the working of WFUCA members and better coordination with UNESCO Headquarters. Regarding the WFUCA World Congress, he expressed his concern that the amendment to WFUCA Constitution as demanded by UNESCO has not been adopted yet and the situation of the implementation of the “Regulatory Framework” by all members of WFUCA is not yet clear. Besides, after hectic session of Executive Board Meeting and the 40th General Conference, the attendance of high level officials including the Director-General in WFUCA Congress will be highly doubtful. In conclusion, Mr. Genc Seiti considered that it is a sensitive point for WFUCA to hold its Congress in UNESCO Headquarter. He suggested to consider the possibility to postpone the 10th WFUCA World Congress to next year.

With this background, the Extraordinary Session of the Executive Board of WFUCA is being held, for the first time at its own office in Paris.

Item 02: Adoption of the Report of the 39th Session of the Executive Board of WFUCA

The President informed that the minutes of the 39th session of the Executive Board of WUCFA were circulated to all EB members and changes have already been made based on the comments, including a most recent one received from Italy.

Ms. Mane Fall proposed another comment for the third paragraph on page 5, to clarify that Senegal had no issues with their National Commission, but indeed there are similar situation in other African countries.

It was agreed that the Secretariat will adjust the paragraph accordingly. Following this decision, the minutes were adopted.

Mr. Ioannis Maronitis said that the previous EB meeting was solely funded by the Greek National Federation, which showed that the UNESCO Clubs movement is in the heart of the people of Greece. The support from the European Federation had helped strengthening its activities in this difficult period.

Item 03: Implementation of the “Regulatory Framework” regarding Associations and Clubs for UNESCO adopted by the General Conference of UNESCO in 2017

Referring to the background of the Regulatory Framework, the President recalled the main concern in the beginning, which was regarding the continuation of the Regional Federations of UNESCO Clubs, Centres & Associations. In response to the concerns expressed over the UNESCO Club movement by the then ADG/ERI, the President had explained on many occasions the necessity of the Regional Federations. Negotiations with the then ADG/ERI were also held around the discontinuation of the ‘UNESCO Centres’, and revision of the WFUCA constitution.

As the Regulatory Framework was adopted at the General Conference in 2017, it was officially decided that WFUCA will be given ‘2 years’ time to make the adjustments on functioning of the ‘Centres’. However, no updates have been received from National Federations on how it is being implemented? He reminded that UNESCO Secretariat need to report to the Executive Board, to be held in autumn 2019, on the implementation of the Regulatory Framework. He requested to the EB members to respect the adopted resolution and change the “Centres” accordingly, as the Regulatory Framework was based on the concerns expressed by the National Commissions of the UNESCO Member States.

Recognizing the difficulties expressed by colleagues from Greece, Korea, Kazakhstan, as well as by other members through emails, the EB members agreed that WFUCA has the duty to remind its members for the compliance of the Regulatory Framework. The President informed that after the EB meeting, a letter from WUFCA will be sent to all National Federations requesting them to implement the Regulatory Framework and change the name/title of the ‘Centres’ or convert them into categories I or II Centres. They should strictly comply with other provisions regarding use of name and logo of UNESCO and coordinate with the National Commissions in their respective countries.

Ms. Mane Fall described the situation faced in Senegal that due to the change of the ministry, they cannot get in touch with the concerned person in National Commission responsible for UNESCO Clubs, but they will try to find a way to have discussion after this meeting.

Recently, several European National Commissions for UNESCO reported to UNESCO their observations on the work carried out by the respective National Federations. This is why the Secretariat has requested all of its members to obtain a fresh accreditation letter from their respective National Commissions for UNESCO. Few National Federations have already obtained and shared the accreditation letter; some of them have informed that as July - August are the summer holidays, accreditations may be received later this month or at the beginning of September.

Mr. Bhatnagar then shared with the Executive Board Members, 3-4 incidents reported in the meeting with UNESCO officials as follows:

In the case of Spain, the Spanish National Federation involved into the issue of 'Catalonia' and made political statement on behalf of UNESCO National Federation, this case was strongly objected by the National Commission and reported to UNESCO Secretariat.

In the case of France, there were some issues between the Natcom and the National Federation. Only about twenty UNESCO Clubs are reported to be recognized by French NatCOM, while there are over two hundred UNESCO Clubs as its members, as claimed by the French National Federation. Recently, they signed an agreement to establish a Certification Committee and try to solve this problem.

In Italy, the National Commission recognized only ten clubs and complained the cases of misuse of UNESCO name and logo.

The above mentioned cases were discussed at the meeting initiated by European National Commissions. However, as explained earlier, these cases were conveyed through discussions with UNESCO Secretariat, but no official records were provided to WUFCA.

The good news is that many National Commissions showed interests in UNESCO Club movements in their country, especially in Africa and Arab regions. Iran National Commission has contacted WFUCA Secretariat for help in establishing UNESCO Clubs in their country.

Mr. Bhatnagar also read the comments received from Ms. Maria Paola Azzario, Honorary President of the Italian Federation and ex-officio member, on behalf of Italian Federation. She reported about the steps taken by Italian Federation regarding the implementation of the Regulatory Framework.

A letter received from Ms. Daniela Popescu, President of European Regional Federation, was also presented in the meeting, in which she informed that she has sent a letter from her official e-mail address of the Romanian National Commission to all her colleagues of the European National Commissions for issuing the accreditation letters. She also informed WUFCA about the work carried out by the European Federation to improve the relationship between National Commissions and National Federations. Ms. Popescu asked about the situation of the US Federation, since US is a non-member to UNESCO now. In her letter, Ms. Popescu suggested

WUFCA to send a letter to all National Commissions of UNESCO to seek the accreditation of National Federations. She also suggested to publish all monthly newsletters of WFUCA in the website of EFUCA and prepare a new official website of WFUCA.

The President also mentioned that Dr. Enrique Renteria Castro has written an email, in which he raised the issue that some National Commissions in Latin America do not show much attention in recognizing the National Federations of UNESCO Clubs in their respective countries.

Regarding WFUCA website, the secretariat briefed the Executive Members that the old website including the domain has been managed by Vietnam National Federation, the website was hacked once last year and restored by the Vietnamese colleagues. However, as the Secretariat does not have any access to the previous website, no information has been updated since then.

In conclusion of Item 3, Mr. Bhatnagar highlighted again the importance of the implementation of the Regulatory Framework and said that the secretariat will share again the Regulatory Framework with all members to ensure its compliance.

Item 04: Adoption of the amendments to WFUCA Constitution

The president introduced the background of the necessity to amend the WFUCA Constitution again. This was a long standing demand of UNESCO, as the current WFUCA constitution was considered unclear in some parts and too lengthy to understand.

The members of Executive Board discussed the amendments to the Constitution, in detail and reached on consensus on the revised version of the Constitution (see Annex I).

Item 05: Preparation work for the 10th WFUCA World Congress

As mentioned in beginning of the meeting, during the meeting with UNESCO/PAX in June 2019, the Secretariat was suggested to consider postponing the 10th World Congress as it was initially planned. Since the amendment of WFUCA Constitution demanded by UNESCO has not been adopted yet, and the situation of the implementation of the “Regulatory Framework” by all members of WFUCA was not yet clear.

UNESCO Secretariat had also pointed out that the Director-General of UNESCO will report to the EXB of UNESCO during its 207th sessions on the implementation of the Regulatory Framework. The feedback from EXB of UNESCO on the implementation of Regulatory Framework would affect the attitude of Director-General and other

high-level officials on attending WFUCA World Congress. Therefore, it would be safer for WFUCA to postpone the World Congress until next year when the outcome of UNESCO EXB is clear.

Based on this background, Mr. Bhatnagar invited all present members to discuss whether to postpone the date or change the venue of WFUCA World Congress?

Ms. Yulia Averina asked if there was any other National Federation which had proposed to host the World Congress and the financial matters on holding the World Congress in UNESCO headquarters.

Mr. Bhatnagar said if the World Congress is to be held in UNESCO headquarters, expenses would mainly include the rent of the meeting room and charges of the interpreters. Due to the financial restrictions, WUFCA will not be able to provide accommodation for every participant; subsidies will be provided only to members from least developed countries. During the last WFUCA Executive Board meeting, proposals were received from Mexico, Jamaica and Greece to host the World Congress.

Regarding the proposal from Mexico, Mr. Bhatnagar explained that he had communication with Dr. Enrique. Since UNESCO's investigation into Ms. Harriet Turner's title of Goodwill Ambassador is still in progress (and has been taken over by the Legal Affairs Office of UNESCO), we should temporarily avoid holding the World Congress in Mexico, the sensitive location, before the results of the investigation comes out. Mr. Enrique has already expressed his understanding on this matter.

Regarding the proposal from Jamaica, Mr. Bhatnagar said he did not receive further information from Mr. Everton Hannam about holding the World Congress.

Regarding the proposal from Greece, Mr. Ioannis Maronitis said he indeed proposed to hold the World Congress in Greece during last WFUCA Executive Board meeting. Thereafter, many EB members supported the World Congress taking place in UNESCO headquarters for improving the visibility of WFUCA in UNESCO. He agreed that to rebuild the partnership with UNESCO, it is very important for WFUCA. Therefore, he fully supported the proposal to have the next World Congress in UNESCO headquarters, if there is any difficulties, the Greece Federation could still host the Congress.

There were some suggestions to keep the date and choose another venue in Paris other than UNESCO Headquarters to hold the World Congress. Ms. Sunjoo Lee pointed out that holding the World Congress in UNESCO is a symbolic advantage for WFUCA. If we hold the World Congress in other parts of Paris instead of UNESCO Headquarters, it might lead people to think negative and suspect of the relationship between UNESCO and WFUCA. Her point was supported by all the other members.

Regarding the timing set for the upcoming World Congress, Mr. Yanqing Tan expressed concern on the visibility of WFUCA's achievement. He said since there was no stable relationship between WFUCA and UNESCO, between National Federations and relative National Commissions, what WFUCA was going to present to participants during the World Congress. He suggested re-considering the dates of the next World Congress, in view of the difficult situation being faced and awaiting for the clear attitude of EXB of UNESCO on the implementation of Regulatory Framework.

Ms. Sabina Akzharova suggested to postpone the World Congress and to decide the new dates during the next EXB of UNESCO in April 2020 for the following reasons: 1. It is sure that the Director-General will be in the headquarters for the opening ceremony of the session of EXB; 2, since most National Commissions will send representatives to participate in this session, we can take this opportunity to invite them to the World Congress and promote the understanding of UNESCO Club movement and WFUCA.

Ms. Yulia Averina agreed with her and further suggested to put up an exhibition at the time of World Congress to improve the visibility of WFUCA and let UNESCO and National Commissions know the achievements and progress of WFUCA, Regional Federations and National Federations.

Ms. Mane Fall suggested to hold another EB meeting of WFUCA during the General Conference.

Mr. Bhatnagar informed that WFUCA, as a NGO in official relationship with UNESCO, is invited in every General Conference to address in the plenary session and many members may come to participate in the General Conference, if necessary, an EXB meeting could be held in WUFCA's office during that time.

After lengthy discussions, the members agreed to the proposal to have the next World Congress in UNESCO Headquarters during the next UNESCO Executive Board Meeting in April 2020. In case the room in UNESCO Headquarters is not available during the EXB session, the secretariat may adjust the date between March and May 2020 according to the feedback from UNESCO. All members unanimously consented to the proposal.

Item 06: Financial Matters: Report of the Treasurer & approval thereof

Ms. Mane Fall, the Treasurer of WFUCA, presented the current financial situation of WFUCA. She mentioned that only eight members have paid the membership fee in the last year. She said she would send a letter to all members to remind them to make the due payment.

Mr. Dharendra Bhatnagar explained that the office rent of the secretariat of WFUCA, as well as the subsidy of the staff are covered by the voluntary contributions from China. The secretariat has not spent any amount on this account from the regular budget.

While discussing the financial difficulties faced by WFUCA, Ms. Sabina Akzharova suggested WFUCA to apply for the Participation Programme to UNESCO, as an NGO in official partnership with UNESCO.

Mr. Dharendra Bhatnagar informed about the efforts made by WUFCA on the Participation Programme. He said, two proposals were submitted to UNESCO last year, out of which one was approved in last December, regarding the “International Youth Forum on Creativity and Heritage along the Silk Roads” which took place in this March and April in China. Another one was about the 10th Pan African Conference of UNESCO Clubs submitted by Senegal Federation, which did not receive the approval from UNESCO, for financial administration reason.

[Note: For the Participation Programme of 2014-2015 regarding 9th Pan African Conference of UNESCO Clubs held in Cameroon, the auditor of UNESCO found the total amount of invoice provided was less than the amount of the funds approved. WFUCA secretariat was requested by UNESCO for further clarification and financial proof, in January 2019. After learning about the situation from the President, the Treasurer, our colleague from Cameroon National Federation and other relative persons, WFUCA Secretariat returned the difference of 711.73 euros back to UNESCO, which was reported in the financial report.]

Regarding the financial situation, members gave their suggestions as below:

Ms. Sabina Akzharova proposed to revise the Clause about the criteria of Ex-officio Member, “having 20 years of existence and including at least a hundred (100) active clubs”. She proposed that the Clause may be revised as “having 10 years of existence and including at least a hundred (100) active clubs”. This will increase the number of Ex-officio members and generate more income for WFUCA.

Mr. Bhatnagar thanked Ms. Sabina Akzharova for her suggestion and said that the access criteria were defined by the “Rules of Procedure of the World Federation”. Since the Executive Board adopted the amendment of Constitution today, the next step will be to focus on the revision of the “Rules of Procedure of the World Federation”.

During the meeting, discussion also held on how could WFUCA further broaden its funding source and it is suggested that WUFCA may consider award honorary title to donors. The members agreed that donations from all channels including

Governments, Public Institutions and private sectors with an Official Cooperation with UNESCO should be welcomed. If it is a long-term donation and the amount is not less than a specified amount, WFUCA may consider award honorary title such as Honorary Member or Advisor to the President. If donations are limited for a specific project or specific area, for instance, Global Information Learning or Protection of Culture Heritage etc, a specific Committee under this theme could be established and the honorary title as President of the Initiative Committee for the specific project or specific area may be awarded. However, no matter what honorary title is awarded, the donor cannot intervene in WFUCA's decision.

This proposal was supported by the Executive Board.

At the closing session, Mr. Dharendra Bhatnagar thanked all participants for their active participation and valuable contributions. He announced the meeting closed.

Since the Extra Ordinary Meeting was convened for 12-13 August 2019, next day i.e. on 13 August 2019 Executive Board Members had informal meetings with the Officials of UNESCO/PAX.