NEWSLETTER
March - August 2021

UNESCO Beijing Cluster Office
for the People’s Republic of China,
the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea,
Japan, Mongolia and the Republic of Korea

Feature Story
Extended 44th session of the World Heritage Committee took place from 16 to 31 July 2021 in Fuzhou, China

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From Director’s Desk

We, UNESCO Beijing Cluster Office, are excited to present to you our latest progress through this newsletter of our office which covers the period from March to August, 2021.

In this newsletter, you will see achievements across Education, Culture, Sciences, Social and Human Sciences, Communication and Information from March, and the strategic planning of our office. We are happy to receive messages from our 5 national commissions in the cluster: the People’s Republic of China, Japan, Mongolia, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea and the Republic of Korea, about their vision of the way forward for UNESCO Beijing Cluster Office. Moreover, in this and future editions, we will focus on UNESCO Centres and Chairs in our cluster. They are also valuable assets that have been making great contribution and deserve more visibility.

The past years have seen an increased demand for cross-border and inter-sectoral collaboration. Amid the COVID-19 pandemic, the demand is even greater, calling for joint efforts in new and various forms, among which online publicity is a highly acknowledged one. Thus, by issuing this newsletter, we aim to bring the UNESCO Beijing Cluster Office closer, through online communication and information dissemination, with UNESCO entities and networks, UN system and beyond as a family closely bound together.

We are confident that such a strong connection will help improve our office’s performance and also impact, renew our commitment to UNESCO values, and contribute to delivering the SDGs defined in the 2030 Agenda.

The year 2021 marks the 50th anniversary since China resumes the lawful seat in the United Nations in 1971, so this newsletter is issued just in time to commemorate this special event. Going forward, UNESCO Beijing Office will continue our contribution to linking and promoting the efforts of all 5 cluster countries. I warmly welcome all of you to embark on this journey together with us. We are delighted to present our work, share our information and wish to seek possible cooperation as well as suggestions for improvement from you.

Enjoy your reading please.

Shahbaz Khan
Director and UNESCO Representative to the People’s Republic of China, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, Japan, Mongolia and the Republic of Korea.
Current Progress Made by UNESCO Beijing Office

| Education |

International Symposium on the Role of Education in Poverty Alleviation

On 31 March, the International Symposium on the Role of Education in Poverty Alleviation was held in Beijing, People’s Republic of China. The conference focused on the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, 2030 Agenda and discussed the relationship between education and poverty reduction, with particular focus on SDG1 and SDG4, and shared China's successful practices and experience in poverty alleviation through education. The Chinese National Commission for UNESCO aims to build this as a solid platform within the framework of South-South cooperation and dialogue. The symposium was guided by the 4 Ps of sustainable development: planet, prosperity, people and partnerships to leave no one behind. The symposium was moderated by Mr Qin Changwei, Secretary-General of the Chinese National Commission for UNESCO, who warmly welcomed over 100 education officials and experts participating from China and around the world. China will share case studies with developing countries to demonstrate the role and contribution of education towards poverty alleviation and sustainable development.

The symposium was hosted by the UNESCO Category II Centre - the International Research and Training Centre for Rural Education (INRULED), with support from the Chinese National Commission for UNESCO, Beijing Normal University, and the UNESCO Beijing Cluster Office. Representatives and experts from UNESCO and other international organizations, non-governmental organizations, Ministries of Education from Asia and the Pacific, Europe, Africa, North America participated in the symposium.

UNESCO-APCEIU Virtual Consultation Meeting on Global Citizenship Education (GCED) for East Asian Countries

On 17 June 2021, UNESCO Beijing Cluster Office, in close collaboration with the Asia-Pacific Centre of Education for International Understanding (APCEIU), jointly organized the virtual Sub-Regional Consultation for East Asian countries on Global Citizenship Education (GCED) progress at country level. A total of 20 government officials and experts from the Ministries of Education, the National Commissions for UNESCO, education institutions and civil society organizations in China, Japan, Mongolia and Republic of Korea participated in the consultation.

The sub-regional consultation reviewed the progress, achievements and gaps of GCED implementation at the country level. The participants shared best practices and experiences related to GCED initiatives, policy, capacity development, knowledge sharing and discussed innovative strategies to strengthen and scale-up GCED in the Beijing cluster countries.

Current Progress Made by UNESCO Beijing Office
Mongolia National Virtual Launch of the SDG 4 - Education 2030 Advocacy Month of August 2021

On 6 Aug 2021, UNESCO as custodian agency for SDG4 co-organized with United Nations Resident Coordinator’s Office (UNRC)–Mongolia, UNCT-Mongolia, UNICEF Mongolia, Mongolia Ministry of Education and Science and the Mongolian National Commission for UNESCO, the virtual National Launch of the SDG 4-Education 2030 Advocacy Month of August 2021. The theme of the launch was “Localizing SDG4 for Inclusive, Equitable and Quality Education in Mongolia”.

H.E Mr Enkh-Angalant Luvsantseren, Mongolian Minister of Education and Science acknowledged the significant progress that Mongolia’s education sector had made since 2016. He assured the United Nations and education development partners that the Mongolian Government was strongly committed towards reforming the education system with an aim to build an equitable, inclusive and lifelong world-class education system.

The SDG4 advocacy and awareness month reviewed progress made in terms of SDG4 alignment, integration and implementation in Mongolia and scale-up effective monitoring of the progress and achievement of SDG4 targets by 2030. Several advocacy activities were led by UNESCO and UNICEF during the month.

UNESCO Supports COVID-19 Emergency Response and Recovery for Education Sector in Mongolia

Within the framework of the Mongolia UN COVID-19 Response and Recovery Multi-Partner Trust Fund (COVID-19 MPTF) Project, which was officially launched in Ulaanbaatar in June 2020, Ministry of Education and Science (MoES) collaborated with UNCT, UNICEF, UNFPA and UNESCO Beijing Office to build and ensure continued delivery of education services to students in Mongolia. The UN MPTF Project officially closed in May 2021. The project strategically aligned with National Emergency Response Plan of the Government, as well as with Mongolia Vision 2030 for Sustainable Development. The project is very important in building the resilience of the health and education systems in Mongolia to effectively respond to COVID-19 pandemic and other future disasters and emergencies aligned with the 2030 agenda for sustainable development.

UNESCO worked with the MoES to promote policy dialogue, enhanced institutional capacity and shared best practices in ICTs in education, online and distance education system that benefited learners at all levels of the education system in Mongolia.
The extended 44th session of the World Heritage Committee (44COM) took place from 16 to 31 July 2021 in Fuzhou, Fujian Province, and online. After a one-year hiatus due to the COVID-19 pandemic worldwide, the successful organization of this important meeting was a true testimony of China’s resilience and commitment to the World Heritage Convention and international cooperation. This year’s session combined the work of 2020 and 2021, and covered key agendas including examining the state of conservation of 255 sites already inscribed on the World Heritage List -- 53 of which also figure on the List of World Heritage in Danger, updating the Policy Document on the impacts of Climate Change on World Heritage, and the completion of periodic reporting, a core conservation monitoring mechanism, in countries in the Africa and Arab regions.

At present, the number of World Heritage sites worldwide has risen to 1154, with 56 in China, 25 in Japan, 15 in ROK, 5 in Mongolia, and 2 in DPRK. 4 new sites from the cluster region were inscribed to the World Heritage list, including 2 cultural sites and 2 natural sites. They are:
1. Quanzhou: Emporium of the World in Song-Yuan China (China)
2. Getbol, Korean Tidal Flats (Republic of Korea)
3. Amami-Oshima Island, Tokunoshima Island, Northern part of Okinawa Island, and Iriomote Island (Japan)
4. Jomon Prehistoric Sites in Northern Japan (Japan)

UNESCO Beijing Office participated in two side events. On 17 July, UNESCO Beijing Office and the Ministry of Education co-organized a side event on “World Heritage Education Towards a Sustainable Future”, which provided an important platform for policy dialogue and experience sharing in World Heritage education for around 200 representatives, including UNESCO officials, ministers, officials of Fujian Province and experts around the world. On 28 July, Prof. Shahbaz Khan attended and delivered remarks at “From Fuzhou to Kazan -- The Echo of World Heritage Leadership”, which served to promote the exchange of knowledge and good practices of World Heritage conservation and management between Fuzhou and Kazan, Russia -- hosting city of the 45COM, as well as the experience of hosting the World Heritage Committee.
ResiliArt Movement in Mongolia

UNESCO Beijing Office, in close partnership with the UNESCO National Commission in Mongolia, organized a series of 5 ResiliArt debates between October 2020 and April 2021 addressing the challenges faced by the cultural and creative sector in the country, notably due to COVID. The fifth and final debate on 15 April 2021 gathered various creative workers and cultural professionals to deliberate measures to develop a resilient cultural sector. Building on the conclusions of the five ResiliArt debates in Mongolia, a list of recommendations was elaborated to facilitate the future development of suitable policies and mechanisms to assist artists recover from the effect of the COVID-19 crisis and enhance the resilience of creative expressions in the sector. On 21 May 2021, the occasion of World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development and within the framework of the Mongolian Innovation Week the Ministry of Education and Science, the Mongolian State University of Arts and CLT, and the Ministry of Culture organized the International Cultural and Creative Industry Conference 2021. The ICCI Conference also provided the opportunity to present and discuss the recommendations emanating from the ResiliArt movement in Mongolia. The set of recommendations emanating from the ResiliArt movement in Mongolia was submitted to the Ministry of Culture in June 2021.

“Heritage So Young” campaign launched on China Cultural and Natural Heritage Day on 12 June 2021

The second Saturday of June is China’s Cultural and Natural Heritage Day, and the theme of this year’s celebration is “People’s Heritage, People to Share”. To encourage more young people to participate in promoting, safeguarding and transmitting cultural and natural heritage, UNESCO Beijing Office launched a heritage communication campaign named “Heritage So Young” jointly with Communication University of China within the project framework of UNESCO – China Youth Development Foundation Mercedes-Benz Star Fund “Conservation and Management of World Heritage Sites in China” Phase IV (2021-2024).

This communication campaign will continue for three years. In addition to enriching the online dialogue on social media platforms, UNESCO Beijing Office also joins youth in exploring the heritage stories of four World Heritage sites: Shilin (Yunnan Province) of South China Karst, Songtao (Guizhou Province) of Fanjingshan, Chishui (Guizhou Province) of China Danxia, and Ya’an and Wolong (Sichuan Province) of Sichuan Giant Panda Sanctuaries, and in promoting sustainable development of the World Heritage sites through the power of youth.

Watch an introductory video

“Heritage So Young” launching video addressed by Prof. Shabbaz Khan (Watch it here)
Exchanging experience in East Asian creative economy for the SDGs: the UNESCO Online Debate on Creative Economy for Sustainable Development in East Asia

On 23 May 2021, UNESCO Beijing Office organized the UNESCO Online Debate on Creative Economy for Sustainable Development in East Asia, to celebrate the International Year of Creative Economy for Sustainable Development. Speaking at the opening, Prof. Shahbaz Khan highlighted the economic and social contributions of the creative economy to the Sustainable Development. Five prominent panelists in China, Mongolia, ROK and Japan, from the fields of cultural trade, cultural and creative industries (CCI) policy research, film and art industries participated in the debate to discuss challenges and approaches for the sustainable development of CCI, the power of arts and culture and the resilience of creativity beyond COVID-19.

East Asia is a dynamic space in terms of the cultural and creative economy. In November 2020, Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (RCEP) was signed by 10 ASEAN member states (Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam) and Australia, New Zealand, China, Republic of Korea and Japan. This broad economic partnership agreement of 15 member countries accounts for approximately 30% of the world’s GDP value, trade value and population. The impact of this scale of free trade agreement for Cultural and Creative Industries (CCI) is expected to be significant even for the neighbouring countries of the member states.

Webinar on the 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Culture Expressions held in Japan


Speaking at the opening, Prof. Shahbaz Khan, Director of UNESCO Beijing Office, highlighted the importance of the economic and social contributions of the creative industries to the global economy and sustainable development. Dr. Koichiro Matsuura, the former Director-General of UNESCO (1999-2009), gave his keynote lecture on the 2005 Convention for the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions. He emphasized that it is essential for Japanese society to recognize the importance of the 2005 Convention and the merits of ratification. He stressed that the Convention is vital for both the global community and Japan, and thus urged Japan to ratify the Convention. Mr Wataru Iwamoto, Director-General of the International Research Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Asia-Pacific Region (IRCI) UNESCO Category 2 Centre gave a special lecture on ‘Intangible Cultural Heritage and Cultural Diversity’. The Japanese version of the UNESCO information kit "Investing in Creativity" was presented at the Webinar as a comprehensive information material covering all the essential aspects of the 2005 Convention.

Read more
Strengthening cooperation with Prof. WANG Ding and the Chinese MAB National Committee

On 26 July 2021, Prof. Shahbaz Khan, Director of UNESCO Beijing Office met with Prof. WANG Ding, Secretary-General of Chinese National Committee for UNESCO’s Man and the Biosphere Programme (MAB China) and his team.

During the meeting, Prof. Shahbaz Khan expressed appreciation for MAB China in supporting, implementing, and contributing to the development of the UNESCO Man and the Biosphere Programme in China. UNESCO Beijing Office always takes MAB China as one of our most important partners. Together, UNESCO Beijing Office and MAB China implemented important cooperation, which had great impact within China and globally. Our cooperation made firm contributions in achieving SDGs, especially SDG 15. UNESCO Beijing Office would like to continue to work closely with MAB China, focus on areas of common interest and develop more cooperation with greater impact.

Promoting Collaboration through Strategic Meeting with Prof. KUANG Shangfu and IWHR

On 5 August 2021, Prof. Shahbaz Khan, Director of UNESCO Beijing Office visited the China Institute of Water Resources and Hydropower Research (IWHR) and met with Prof. KUANG Shangfu, President of IWHR as well as his team.

During the meeting, Prof. Khan appreciated the contribution of IWHR in the field of water development in China and the world. He emphasized that UNESCO Beijing Office would strengthen the cross-disciplinary cooperation and popularization of water science and education with IWHR, enrich and improve the international sediment research platform, enhance the impact of IWHR’s affiliated Category II Centre (International Research and Training Centre on Erosion and Sedimentation), and explore opportunities of international water culture exchange. Prof. Kuang put forward ideas on strengthening international water science education, increasing the influence of the UNESCO Category II Centre, and expanding international water culture exchange.

UNESCO Beijing Office and IWHR also discussed in-depth on topics including the achievements of China’s water ecological civilization, medium and long-term water science education, and promoting the water community of shared future.

Successful launching of the Beauty of Life on Earth Exhibition

On 9 July 2021, Prof. Shahbaz Khan, Director of UNESCO Beijing Office visited the Alliance of International Science Organizations (ANSO) Secretariat and met with Prof. CAO Jinghua, Executive Director of ANSO Secretariat and his team. During the meeting, both parties discussed potential future cooperation on Women in Science, Scholarship, Open Science and specifically appreciated the cooperation on the “Beauty of Life on Earth” Exhibition.

This Exhibition was to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the UNESCO MAB Programme and as a warm-up of CBD COP15. Together with UNESCO Beijing Office and ANSO, the Chinese MAB National Committee, the Endangered Species Scientific Commission in China, the International Society of Zoological Sciences, the Institute of Botany of Chinese Academy of Sciences, Abertis Foundation, the Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Korea, the Spanish National Parks Autonomous Agency and Volkswagen played important roles to make this Exhibition possible in Beijing.

UNESCO prepared 16 panels for this Exhibition from Austria, China, Germany, Indonesia, Maldives, Morocco, Spain, the United Republic of Tanzania and Uruguay. The exhibition was successfully launched at the Institute of Botany of the Chinese Academy of Sciences in Beijing on 30 August 2021 and will take place until 19 September 2021. It's about life!
**Social and Human Sciences**

**Strengthening cooperation with Nanjing on promoting peace, cultural exchange, and youth development**

The UNESCO Beijing Office reaffirmed its strong cooperation with the Chinese National Commission for UNESCO and the Nanjing Municipal Government on a number of key activities. One such activity is the ongoing collaboration with the Nanjing Municipal Government and the UNESCO Chair on Peace Studies at Nanjing University to organize the second edition of the annual Nanjing Peace Forum (NPF) in October 2021. During a meeting with the Forum’s focal points on 2 July 2021, Prof. Shahbaz Khan, Director of the UNESCO Beijing Office, emphasized the importance of the notion of ecocivilization for peace, particularly in the current context of accelerating climate change, loss of biodiversity, and environmental degradation.

Consequently, activities of the 2021 NPF will be designed to facilitate concrete reflection, capacity building and action around this notion, bringing together all areas of UNESCO’s work, especially in the natural and social sciences.

In parallel, UNESCO Beijing Office has also supported efforts by the UNESCO Chair on Peace Studies at Nanjing University to introduce Peace Education through pilot classes in different junior and senior high schools. The UNESCO Beijing Office will also be providing support to the Nanjing Municipal Government on its World Historical and Cultural Cities Expo.

**Amplifying the outcomes of the International Youth Forum on Creativity and Heritage along the Silk Roads (IYF) with Changsha and Nanjing**

On 8 July 2021, UNESCO Beijing Office, in a meeting with representatives from the Chinese National Commission for UNESCO, the Changsha Development Center of Media Arts, and the Nanjing Literature Center, agreed that it is now time to multiply the results of the IYF through a stronger multidisciplinary approach. UNESCO Beijing Office is facilitating linkages between the IYF and international experts and networks in creativity, heritage and resilience, to provide concrete support to youth capacity building and action. This is especially relevant to address the social and cultural impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, the accelerating climate crisis, and rapid digitalization of society.

**Strengthening bioethics and ethics of science and technology in Mongolia and the Asia-Pacific region**

UNESCO Beijing Office, in collaboration with the Mongolian National Commission for UNESCO and the Mongolian Academy of Science, organized an online workshop on bioethics and ethics of science and technology on 17 June 2021 as an introductory background for the Ethics Teacher Training Course (ETTC) that will be held in Mongolia in early October 2021. Over 140 participants, including Mongolian scholars, educators, teachers, medical professionals, and policy makers attended this event.

In addition to capacity building assistance provided to the sub-region, UNESCO Beijing Office, through its Social and Human Sciences unit, is also supporting UNESCO field offices in the Asia-Pacific region on bioethics and ethics of science and technology issues. In July 2021, the office, in collaboration with UNESCO Bangkok Office and UNESCO Headquarters, delivered an online lecture on the ethical implications of artificial intelligence at King Mongkut’s University of Technology North Bangkok (KMUNTB). Furthermore, UNESCO Beijing Office is also actively coordinating UNESCO’s engagement with the Asia-Pacific Network of Ethics Committees (APNEC), an initiative supported by UNESCO and the WHO.
School managers in Mongolia discuss possibilities of integrating MIL components into school curricula

On 26 March 2021, UNESCO organized an online consultation workshop for 40 urban and rural secondary school principals and managers from Mongolia, to learn about a tailored Media and Information Literacy (MIL) Curriculum, and to discuss how to implement the Curriculum in secondary schools. All participants acknowledged the significance of promoting MIL at all levels and expressed their commitment to making efforts to facilitate integration of MIL curricula into teaching practices. The consultative workshop was part of a three-year MIL project implemented by the Press Institute and the Mongolian National Commission for UNESCO, with the support of the Swedish International Development Agency and UNESCO Beijing Office. Since 2019, the project has advanced knowledge and understanding of MIL through capacity-building activities, and has brought consensus on the urgency of policy efforts to strengthen MIL across society among multiple stakeholder groups.

UNESCO calls for concerted efforts for full inclusion and participation of persons with disabilities and older persons

On 7 April 2021, Prof. Shahbaz Khan attended the online Thematic Seminar on Information Accessibility, organized by the Internet Society of China under the World Summit on the Information Society. In his opening remarks, Prof. Khan highlighted the unprecedented opportunity provided by Information and Communication Technologies for social inclusion and empowerment of persons with disabilities. In doing so, he suggested accessibility must be taken into consideration while creating technologies, products, contents and services, to mitigate the major risk of leaving persons with disabilities further behind, especially in times of crisis.

UNESCO works towards the promotion of inclusive education, accessible culture and sciences, communication and information, as well as the creation of inclusive cities, for better inclusion and empowerment of persons with disabilities. In China, UNESCO chairs the UN Theme Group on Disability, and thus is uniquely positioned to foster dialogue and collaboration among disability stakeholders, in order to support China’s fulfillment of international and national commitments to the equal rights and inclusion of persons with disabilities.

2021 World Press Freedom Day Online Discussion held in Mongolia to Advocate “Information as a Public Good”

On 3 May 2021, UNESCO organized an online discussion in Mongolia, under the theme of “Information as a Public Good” for the celebration of the World Press Freedom Day, and to mark the 30th anniversary of the Windhoek Declaration, which paved the way for the development of press freedom internationally.

In his remarks, Prof. Shahbaz Khan stressed the need to develop media viability, reinforce the transparency of online platforms, and strengthen MIL capacities among citizens. He called on all stakeholders to work together, in affirming the importance of cherishing information as a public good, exploring what can be done in the production, distribution and reception of content to strengthen journalism, and advancing transparency and empowerment while leaving no one behind.
On Friday 13 August 2021, UNESCO Beijing Office conducted a full-day staff retreat, in answer to an urgent call to press ahead the strategic development of the office through smart and joint planning. Such strategic planning was firstly assisted by multiple overarching lectures about UN reform, UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF), strategic transformation and resource mobilization. Secretary-generals from national commissions of the 5 cluster countries also offered insightful suggestions. Besides, 3 reflection sessions designed in between were another important opportunity for all colleagues to air their voice, exchange ideas and brainstorm the way forward for the office.

The day started with the Director Prof. Shahbaz Khan’s recount of the mission and history of UNESCO. As a cluster office covering five countries in the Northeast Asia i.e. People’s Republic of China, Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, Japan, Mongolia and Republic of Korea, UNESCO Beijing aims to support sustainable development agenda of the five countries through its national counterparts, the National Commissions for UNESCO. The Secretary-Generals of the National Commissions for UNESCO from all five countries addressed the meeting through video messages, in which they shared major development highlights from their countries and expressed their sincere appreciation of Beijing Office’s support. They also extended expectations for the strengthened role of Beijing Office to coordinate and serve the five Member States in Northeast Asia.

The UN Resident Coordinator to China Mr Siddharth Chatterjee was invited to share major highlights of UN reform, UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) and South-South Cooperation in China, following which Mr Joe Colombano, Head of Resident Coordinator’s Office in China, gave an overall introduction of the context and process of UNSDCF development, as well as the main outcomes of UNSDCF for China. Mr Robert Parua, Education Programme Specialist of UNESCO Beijing Office introduced the UNSDCF for Mongolia.

These strategic views from UN and national counterparts laid the foundation for fruitful collective reflection sessions on how UNESCO Beijing could strategically position itself in the UNCTs, and how it could play a more effective facilitator role and have more impact among the cluster countries. These reflections then led to a practical discussion on some concrete next steps in light of the strategic transformation that UNESCO is undergoing, which covers four pillars as Prof. Khan presented, from strengthening of programmes to integration of actions with ethical reflections and foresights, opening-up of the organization and modernizing its way of working. The retreat also provided practical sessions on administration procedures and resource mobilization training.

Overall, the retreat generated much energy among the staff and clarified on the organizational direction to stay relevant and be more strategic, which will translate into concrete actions, such as developing country strategy documents, organizing annual meetings of National Commissions in Northeast Asia, enhancing internal and external communication, strengthening partnerships, inspiring staff creativity and developing multi-sectoral and multi-disciplinary programmes.

Read more on our Intranet page
1. An evaluation survey of satisfaction level

2-3. Colleagues’ understandings of the key values of UNESCO

4. Colleagues’ inputs during the reflection sessions

5. Colleagues exchanging their insights in discussion

6. Colleagues listening to presentations with high attention

7. Colleagues wearing the new office visibility products. The concept of this product design is focused on UNESCO’s mission of building peace in the minds of men and women. Doves and wheat are symbolic of love and peace, flying towards Beijing Office’s five cluster countries.
Dear Colleagues,

UNESCO Field Offices are important in coordinating the work of the Organization at the regional level. UNESCO Beijing Office is expected to be familiar with the situation and priorities of the five Member States and develop programmes in close consultation with the National Commissions. It is also expected to foster cooperation and exchanges within and beyond the region. In this connection, I am pleased to share some of our preliminary thoughts and suggestions as follows.

First, we suggest that UNESCO Beijing Office raise the voices of our region in UNESCO’s strategic planning. Northeast Asia is a region with robust economic development. It is also a region actively engaged in and have made great progress in varieties of UNESCO activities. Although UNESCO convenes varieties of consultation meetings in preparing its new Medium Term Strategy and the new biennium Programme and Budget, UNESCO Beijing Office is a special channel to make our voice heard. I hope that Beijing Office will enhance its exchanges with the five Member States to better understand our priorities/needs/experiences/ideas and share them to the Organization, so as to promote more active participation of the region in the programmes and activities of UNESCO to make greater contributions to the achievement of SDGs.

Second, we suggest that UNESCO Beijing Office develop innovative projects and organize creative activities that will facilitate cooperation among the five Member States within the region. Education, World Heritage both tangible and intangible, creative cultural industry have been the focus of the region, where there’s great potential for us to collaborate. I hope that Beijing Office will further identify the common interests of us and explore new ways and activities that will bring us closer.

Mr QIN Changwei
Secretary-General of the Chinese National Commission for UNESCO

In terms of our strategic planning, we also received video messages of valuable insights from our 5 National Commissions as a token of strong support. It can be seen that they are concerned about the future development of UNESCO Beijing Office, and the shared future of the cluster countries in East Asia as a whole.

(The following 5 speeches are arranged in alphabetical order by country.)
In my opinion, the most important task for UNESCO Beijing Office is to develop dialogue, liaison and contact with the Member States and its National Commissions so as to make an active contribution to the development of relevant countries within its fields of mandate.

Under the circumstances of the prolonged public health crisis, I reckon that the provision of a mechanism and opportunities for the Member States to regularly inform and share their success stories, experiences and lessons learnt can be a way to enhance the position and role of the Office.

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UNESCO Beijing Office, as in cases with other offices, has assumed an important task for implementation of the UNESCO’s strategy. For proper implementation of the UNESCO’s strategy by reflecting the requirements of its Member States, the Office has to direct due attention to the establishment and implementation of detailed action plans that go along with the conditions of individual countries and the region.

In particular, a lesson should be drawn from the big impact of today’s pandemic on education sector and priority given to the completion of e-education system and strengthening of ICT education in Member States for the next 5 years.

Mr JO Chol Su
Secretary-General of DPRK National Commission for UNESCO

Full speech here

This year, Japan celebrated the 70th anniversary of its membership in UNESCO. Taking this opportunity, the Japanese National Commission for UNESCO intends to further revitalize our UNESCO activities, such as developing young people who will be responsible for future UNESCO activities and collaborating with various stakeholders such as private companies and NGOs. In addition, Japan is implementing various activities and projects in the Asia-Pacific region through the Japanese funds-in-trust (JFIT).

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It is my understanding that the Beijing office is also engaged in various sub-regional activities, and we hope that, in collaboration with the UNESCO headquarters and the regional bureaus in the Asia-Pacific region which have the joint aim of working to realize the UNESCO missions, support will be provided to the countries that are in real need of technical advice so that the UNESCO activities in the member states of the region will be further developed.

It is our sincere hope that we will be able to work with the Beijing Office in order to build better relations between the member states in the region.

Mr TAGUCHI Yasushi
Secretary-General of Japanese National Commission for UNESCO

Full speech here
First of all, I would like to suggest that we restart the annual meeting of Secretaries-General of National Commissions in Northeast Asia that were arranged by the UNESCO Beijing Office between 1998 and 2012. We hope the Beijing Office can and will play a key role in restarting and facilitating the meeting. In particular, as sustainable peace on the Korean Peninsula is one of the key elements of the peace in Northeast Asia and beyond, North Korean National Commission’s participation in the meeting will be an important factor in the success of this regional cooperation process. In view of the difficulties in communication, we expect the UNESCO Beijing Office to play the role of facilitator and coordinator in resuming the annual meeting. I am confident that the meeting will greatly contribute to advancing UNESCO’s mission of forging a culture of peace in our region.

Secondly, in the Education sector, the diverse webinars held by UNESCO during the COVID-19 education crisis have been important for information sharing. However, I’m afraid that too many similar online meetings simply for information sharing are being held separately by different sectors, institutes/centers and field offices. It is our hope that the Beijing Office will play a role beyond promoting information exchange among Member States. We hope the Beijing Office can function further as a laboratory of ideas for promoting SDG4 implementation within our region.

In culture sector, we are grateful for your efforts in supporting the implementation of UNESCO’s cultural conventions in Mongolia. In the next five years, we would need more support in implementing Article 16 of UNESCO 2005 Convention, 1980 Recommendation Concerning the Status of Artists, as well as further strengthening national capacity of government agencies, particularly newly established Ministry of Culture about the Conventions.

In the field of Natural Science, we are requesting UNESCO Beijing Office to support the development of the new Science and Technology Innovation Master plan of Mongolia and the effective implementation of GO-SPIN online platform in the coming years. In addition, International, regional and sub-regional networking and capacity building activities concerning the MAB, IHP and Global Geoparks programme should be included in the strategic plan of the Beijing Office.

Ms Uyanga Sukhbaatar
Former Secretary-General of Mongolian National Commission for UNESCO

Mr Kyung-Koo Han
Secretary-General of Korean National Commission for UNESCO

Full speech here
Focus on UNESCO Centres & Chairs

| UNESCO Category 2 Institutes and Centres |

Category 2 Institutes and Centres under the auspices of UNESCO are a global network of institutions of excellence in the Organization’s domains of competence. Given their expertise, these Institutes and Centres contribute to the implementation of UNESCO’s strategic priorities, programmes, and global development agendas, through international and regional cooperation, research, knowledge production, policy advice, and capacity development.

There are currently 25 Category 2 Centres in the cluster countries, 5 in Education, 6 in Culture, 11 in Natural Sciences, 2 in Social and Human Sciences, and 1 in Communication and Information sector. Read more

The International Centre on Space Technologies for Natural and Cultural Heritage under the auspices of UNESCO (HIST)

Introduction

Officially launched in 2011

Function: the first UNESCO Category 2 Centre applying space technologies to the monitoring and conservation of world natural and cultural heritage sites

Mandate: Using space technologies, HIST will assist UNESCO and its Member States in their endeavours to monitor, evaluate and conserve natural and cultural heritage sites and biosphere reserves and geoparks (UNESCO designated sites) to combat the effects of climate change and natural disasters. HIST will build itself into a demonstrative centre using space data for World Heritage conservation, provide services including network inquiry, technical information support and personnel training, and make unique contributions to the management and protection of heritage sites worldwide.

Key activity in 2021

HIST Holds Seminar on Sustainable Development of UNESCO Designated Sites

An online seminar, organized by the International Centre on Space Technologies for Natural and Cultural Heritage under the Auspices of UNESCO (hereafter called “HIST”), was held in Beijing on 16 March 2021 to explore how to use cutting-edge technologies to promote sustainable development of UNESCO-designated sites. The event was held both online and offline, attracting more than 240,000 online attendees.

The 10-year-old HIST will continue to serve as a platform to safeguard the sustainable development of the UNESCO-designated sites, and especially, using space technology to help UNESCO and its member states implement the World Heritage Convention as well as achieve the UN 2030 SDGs. Read more
UNITWIN/ UNESCO Chairs Programme

Launched in 1992, the UNITWIN/UNESCO Chairs Programme, which involves over 850 institutions in 117 countries, promotes international inter-university cooperation and networking to enhance institutional capacities through knowledge sharing and collaborative work. The programme supports the establishment of UNESCO Chairs and UNITWIN Networks in key priority areas related to UNESCO’s fields of competence – i.e. in education, the natural and social sciences, culture and communication.

There are currently around 40 UNITWIN/ UNESCO Chairs, 21 in China, 10 in Japan, 5 in the Republic Of Korea, and 2 in Mongolia.

UNESCO Chair in Entrepreneurial Education at Zhejiang University

Introduction

Established in 2010

Mission:
- Creating an integrated system of research, teaching, training, social service, information and documentation
- Providing a platform for multilateral collaboration in the field of entrepreneurship education

Achievements:
- A research team
- Education programs
- Academic seminars
- Publications
- Partnerships with UNESCO headquarters and its field offices, Category I and II centers, and UNESCO Chairs/ UNITWIN Networks

Goals:
- Facilitate the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in general, and SDG4 and The Education 2030 Framework for Action in particular
- Commit to create a “knowledge bank”, a capacity house, a social change maker, a think-tank and a catalyst for international cooperation in entrepreneurship education

Key activity in 2021

China national consultation meeting for third World Higher Education Conference 2021 held in Zhejiang University, Hangzhou on 24 April 2021

On 24 April 2021, the World Higher Education Conference (WHEC 2021) National Consultation Meeting under the theme “Higher Education in China and the World towards 2030” was successfully held in Zhejiang University. The consultation meeting was jointly hosted by the Chinese National Commission for UNESCO and Zhejiang University, and organized by the UNESCO Chair in Entrepreneurial Education at Zhejiang University and the recently established UNESCO Research Centre at Zhejiang University, and supported by the UNESCO Beijing Cluster Office, the Higher Education Section at UNESCO Headquarters, the Ministry of Education of China and the Communication University of Zhejiang. Representatives, experts, scholars and postgraduate students from UNESCO, the government, research institutes, and higher education institutions in China attended the conference. The in-person event was livestreamed online and reached over 5,000 audience participants.

The consultation provided the Chinese perspective on the future of higher education sharply focused on key issues of higher education including policy, equity, innovation, governance, partnership, qualification recognition and accreditation, quality assurance and lifelong learning. The outcome of the national consultation will contribute towards the third WHEC 2021, which will take place in Barcelona, Spain from 7-9 October 2021.