



THE UNESCO 39th GENERAL CONFERENCE EDUCATION
COMMISSION REPORT
Paris, 1-4 November 2017

ABSTRACT

The Report gives a description of the Education Commission Deliberations and possible implications for the way forward for the SA Unesco National Commission's Education Sector Committee

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Chairperson with Input from Education Commission Delegation

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THE UNESCO 39th GENERAL CONFERENCE

EDUCATION COMMISSION REPORT

HELD FROM 1- 4 NOVEMBER 2017

1. INTRODUCTION

The General Conference consists of a number of events. There are General Policy Debates (in the form of the Leaders Forum and National Statements), Commissions (including the Education, Science, Culture and the APX), Committees (including Credential, Nominations, Legal and Headquarters), Special Events (including the Youth Forum and the High Level Ministerial Meeting on the SDG 4). There are quite a number of side events. The General Conference is a buzz of activity.

The South African delegation that participated in the Education Commission comprised of Ms Palesa Tyobeka, Dr Nkosinathi Sishi, Mr Ghaleeb Jeppie, Mr Joe Samuels, and Ms Bavelile (who participated during the Youth Forum Debate in the Education Commission) and Mr Marthinus van Schalkwyk from the Department of International Relations and Cooperation (Dirco), who dealt with the Israeli/Palestinian Question during the Education Commission Session.

Further to the United States of America indicating that they will be leaving Unesco, the 2018/2021 Budget had to be reconfigured. The overall budget was agreed within the APX Commission while the education programmes budget was dealt within the Education Commission

The Education Commission's work was dealt with from 1 – 4 November 2017. It started on the afternoon of 1 November 2017 with high level leaders focusing on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) that also included launching the Global Education Monitoring Report 2017/18. The Minister of Basic Education, Ms Angie Motshekga, and the newly appointed chairperson of the South African National Commission, Professor Ihron Rensburg, represented South Africa during this event.

The business of the Education Commission was taken care of over three days from 2-4 November 2017: deciding on the main Education programme of Unesco as outlined by the Secretary General, the budget to carry out the programme, new resolutions to update older resolutions and recommendations, progress reports on work done, and deciding new directions that the education programme may take going forward.

The Education Commission process is determined by rules of procedure of Unesco that are fairly elaborate but in essence the process followed is that an item is placed on the agenda and the kind of decision needed is outlined. Member states then indicate whether they want speak to the item. A debate is then allowed. After all the countries have spoken the resolution is adopted by voting. Member states may propose amendments to the resolutions beforehand or they make proposed changes from the floor.

2. AGENDA AND DECISIONS FROM 2 – 4 NOVEMBER 2017

Day 1: 2 November 2017 covered the following items:

3.2 Consideration and adoption of the Draft Education Programme (aka Major Programme I) and Budget for 2018-2021

Decision: The overall Budget limitations was debated and accepted in the APX meeting on 1 November 2017. In the light of the previous day's decisions around the overall revised budget, a revised education programme budget was tabled at the Education Commission. After some deliberation, the revised education programme budget was adopted by the Education Commission.

4.3 Implementation of 38 C/Resolution 72 concerning educational and cultural institutions in the occupied Arab territories.

Decision: The Israeli Government was not happy that this resolution was tabled and adopted by the Education Commission, although they knew that the majority of Member states were going to vote against them. They employed delaying tactics by requesting a roll-call vote at every stage of the proceedings. This process lasted one full day of the commission's time. Eventually the matter was settled and the resolution was adopted unanimously by the Commission. The same resolution which was meant to be served in Culture and Science Commissions as well, was then withdrawn.

Day 2: 3 November 2017 covered the following items:

4.8 UNESCO's role in the implementation of the SDG4-Education 2030 Agenda

Decision: Resolution was adopted.

4.5 Conclusions of the Youth Forum

Decision: Resolution was adopted.

6.1 Progress report on the preparation of a Global Convention on the Recognition of Higher Education Qualifications

Decision: Resolution was adopted with amendments relating to a timeline that is responsive. The drafters asked to make it clear that the Special Committee is the same as an Intergovernmental Committee.

Day 3: 4 November 2017 covered the following items:

4.4 Reports from the Category 1 Institutions and the establishment of Category 2 institutes and centres in China under the auspices of UNESCO

Decision: Reports from Category 1 institutes were adopted.

Switzerland has decided not to continue supporting the IBE because they felt that the IBE had lost its competitive cutting edge and although they will continue supporting UNESCO they will not support IBE.

Decision: Category 2 Institutes - The Teacher Centre was approved. With regards to the ASPnet Centre the Commission approved that the final decision should be taken by the Executive Board.

Background to the decision: Two types of centres were proposed: a Teacher Center and an ASPnet Centre. The principle in the establishment of these centers as UNESCO centers is that there should be credible infrastructure and that the feasibility study should show that they will be viable. This was a matter for adoption without debate.

1. The feasibility study was done on the Teacher Center and this decision was supported by the Executive Board.
2. Feasibility Study on the ASPnet center was not yet completed and will be presented to the next meeting of the Executive Board for review. The Commission was requested to approve that the Executive Board approve on behalf of General Conference.

7.1 Summary of the reports received from Member States on the measures taken to implement the 1960 Convention and Recommendation against Discrimination in Education

Decision: Resolution was adopted

7.2 Consolidated report on the implementation by Member States of the 1974 Recommendation concerning Education for International Understanding Cooperation and Peace and Education relating to Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms

Decision: Resolution was adopted.

7.5 Consolidated report on the implementation by Member States of the 1978 Revised Recommendation concerning the International Standardization of Educational Statistics

Decision: Resolution was adopted

7.6 Preliminary revision of the 1974 Regional Convention on the Recognition of Studies, Diplomas and Degrees in Higher Education in Latin America and the Caribbean (1974)

Decision: Resolution was adopted with amendments - The accepted amendment by El Salvador proposed that intergovernmental meetings not be limited to one but be focused on conclusion of the work. This amendment is made to Paragraph 7 and proposed that the formulation should start "Hold at least two meetings of the committee...."

3. IMPLICATIONS FOR THE EDUCATION SECTOR COMMITTEE OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN NATIONAL COMMISSION.

1. The Education Sector Committee should take note of all the resolutions passed and ensure that these are disseminated to the various stakeholders that are represented on the Committee including the various departments and NGO's. The Committee may consider writing an article for the website and the newspapers on the General Conference and the happenings at the Education Commission Deliberations.
2. The Education Sector Committee should build into its plan of action all the relevant dates that events are scheduled to take place and where feedback is required. For example, the Global Convention on Higher Education has a consultation process that will be starting in January 2018. The Education Committee should play an active role in monitoring and ensuring that there is a South African input into the process (we cannot miss the deadline for submissions this time). South Africa also consider nominating a person to be part of the committee working on the final draft document to be submitted to the 40th general conference.
3. The Education Sector Committee may want to consider making recommendations to the Ministers of Basic Education and Higher Education and Training on a number of matters flowing from the resolutions adopted. For example South Africa is not part of the countries reporting on Unesco's 1974. Recommendation that relates to Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.
4. The Education Sector Committee may also want to consider how it will be promoting and monitoring how South Africa is doing against the various resolutions. For example the committee need to actively promote participation in SDG 4 and the launching of the Global Education Monitoring Report in South Africa.

4. CONCLUSION

We wish to thank the Minister of Basic Education and the Departments of Basic Education and Higher Education and Training for supporting the National Commission of Unesco, in particular the Education Sector Committee, through providing the resources to attend the 39th General Conference of Unesco. We also want to thank the Department of International Relations and Cooperation and the South African Embassy in Paris for their support and advice during the Education Commission deliberations.

Compiled by Joe Samuels, Chairperson: Unesco Education Sector Committee with input from the delegation members, 11 November 2017.

Appendix A:

List of Resolutions (without amendments) Adopted

Item 3.4

- Item 3.4 of the agenda
- DRAFT PROGRAMME AND BUDGET FOR 2018-2021
- Adoption of the provisional budget ceiling

See attached "Unesco GENCON budget decisions Appendix B"

Item 4.5

- Item 4.5 of the agenda
- Conclusions of the Youth Forum - "Youth engaging with UNESCO"
- Decision required: Paragraph 2: Adopted

2. The General Conference may wish to adopt the following resolution:

The General Conference,

Having examined document 39 C/19,

Recalling the UNESCO Operational Strategy on Youth (2014-2017) adopted by the General Conference at its 37th session as the operational framework for UNESCO's work in the area of youth,

Being informed by document 39 C/INF.20 and by document 201 EX/4.INF.2,

Thanking the Director-General's efforts to improve UNESCO's work in the area of youth – notably by enhancing the engagement of young women and men,

1. *Invites* the Director-General to take further appropriate measures to enhance the quality of UNESCO's engagement with young women and men and their organizations, on the basis of the Conclusions of the 10th UNESCO Youth Forum, as well as other UNESCO youth fora;
2. *Invites* Member States to support such efforts, in cooperation with youth and youth organizations from their respective countries.

Item 4.8

- Item 4.8 of the agenda
- UNESCO's role in the implementation of the SDG4-Education 2030
- Decision required: Paragraph 7

PROPOSED RESOLUTION

7. In the light of the above, the General Conference may wish to adopt the following resolution:

The General Conference,

Recalling 38 C/Resolution 11, 37 C/Resolution 11, 202 EX/Decision 6, 200 EX/Decision 7, 197 EX/Decision 6, 196 EX/Decision 7 and 195 EX/Decision 6,

Having examined document 39 C/44,

1. *Expresses* its appreciation to the Director-General for her efforts on the coordination of and support for SDG 4 – Education 2030;
2. *Strongly supports* UNESCO to continue to play its role as outlined in the Incheon Declaration and the Education 2030 Framework for Action by:
 - (a) leading and coordinating the Education 2030 agenda, acting as the focal point for education within the overall 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development coordination structure;
 - (b) continuing the mandate entrusted to it regarding the provision of support to Member States;
 - (c) ensuring that the UNESCO Institute for Statistics continues to be the source of cross-nationally comparable data on education and, in coordination with the SDG Education 2030 Steering Committee and other partners, to develop monitoring indicators, statistical approaches and monitoring tools; and
 - (d) ensuring the global monitoring and reporting on SDG 4 and on education targets in other SDGs through the Global Education Monitoring Report, with due regard to the global mechanism established for review and monitoring of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;
3. *Welcomes* the strong cooperation established to ensure a comprehensive approach as well as the development of multi-stakeholder partnerships with relevant actors and stakeholders;
4. *Urges* Member States to support UNESCO activities on the implementation of SDG4 – Education 2030, including through extrabudgetary sources;
5. *Requests* the Director-General to report at the 205th session of the Executive Board on UNESCO's coordination of and support for SDG 4-Education 2030.

Item 6.1

- Item 6.1 of the agenda
- Progress report on the preparation of a global convention on the recognition of higher education qualifications
- Decision required: Paragraph 10

PROPOSED RESOLUTION

10. In light of the foregoing, the General Conference may wish to adopt the following resolution:

The General Conference,

Recalling 37 C/Resolution 15 and 38 C/Resolution 12,

Further recalling 197 EX/Decision 8 and 202 EX/Decision 8,

Taking note of the broad support expressed by Member States, experts and other stakeholders for the development of a global convention on the recognition of higher education qualifications,

Having examined with appreciation document 39 C/21, which presents the progress report, accompanied by a preliminary draft of the global convention on the recognition of higher education qualifications, and the comments and observations of the Executive Board thereon,

1. *Reaffirms* that a global convention will improve academic mobility, enhance international cooperation in higher education, and will represent a significant step forward towards global academic mobility and trust in higher education systems;
2. *Acknowledges* the progress made regarding the revision of regional recognition conventions in all regions;
3. *Stresses* that the global convention should build upon and complement the existing regional recognition conventions;
4. *Invites* the Director-General to continue the process of elaborating the global convention, and to consult Member States and relevant stakeholders on the preliminary draft in an inclusive manner through consultations;
5. *Encourages* Member States to provide financial resources to facilitate the consultation and preparation process of the draft, to ensure a satisfactory participation of all Member States and relevant stakeholders;
6. *Invites* the Director-General to submit to it, at its 40th session, the final progress report and draft text of the global convention on the recognition of higher education qualifications, for adoption.

Item 7.5

- Item 7.5 of the agenda
- Consolidated report on the implementation by Member States of the 1978 Revised Recommendation concerning the International Standardization of Educational Statistics
- Decision required: Paragraph 15

DRAFT DECISION

15. In the light of the above, the General Conference may wish to adopt the following draft decision:

The General Conference,

1. *Having examined* document 39 C/27,
2. *Recalling* 36 C/Resolution 11 and 37 C/Resolution 10 concerning the 2011 and 2013 Revisions of the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) and 201 EX/Decision 17 regarding their implementation,
3. *Takes note* of the work undertaken on the implementation of the 2011 and 2013 revisions of ISCED and ISCED-F respectively since their adoption;
4. *Notes with satisfaction* that many countries are now using the classifications in their reporting of education and educational attainment data;
5. *Invites* the Director-General:
 - (a) to continue to provide training and capacity-building support to countries needing assistance to adopt the ISCED revisions;
 - (b) to review periodically the three classifications encompassed in ISCED (ISCED- P, ISCED-A and ISCED-F) to ensure that they are consistent with developments in the policies and structures of education and training and to submit proposals for the adoption of major revisions. when appropriate, at future sessions;
 - (c) to submit biennial progress reports of the work accomplished to the Executive Board, the next being due at the 206th session.

Item 7.6

- Item 7.6 of the agenda
- Preliminary revision of the 1974 Regional Convention on the Recognition of Studies, Diplomas and Degrees in Higher Education in Latin America and the Caribbean (1974)
- Decision required: Paragraph 7

PROPOSED RESOLUTION

7. In the light of the above, the General Conference may wish to adopt the following resolution:

The General Conference,

Having examined document 39 C/48 and its annexes,

Reaffirming the importance of promoting academic mobility and quality assurance by facilitating the recognition of qualifications in higher education in Latin America and the Caribbean,

Acknowledging the important role UNESCO plays in this field, particularly through its six conventions and one recommendation on the recognition of studies, diplomas and degrees in higher education,

Conscious that significant changes have taken place in higher education in a more globalized world and that a new generation of recognition conventions that respond to new challenges is needed,

1. *Takes note* of the support expressed by Member States in the region for the adoption of a revised 1974 Regional Convention on the Recognition of Studies, Diplomas and Degrees in Higher Education in Latin America and the Caribbean, and the process initiated in view of this;

2. *Decides* to convene, during 2018-2019 biennium, an International Conference of States (Category I), with a view to examining and adopting amendments to the 1974 Regional Convention on the Recognition of Studies, Diplomas and Degrees in Higher Education in Latin America and the Caribbean, and whose working languages shall be Spanish, English and French;

3. *Invites* the Director-General to conduct the necessary consultations with a view to the preparation of the International Conference of States, in particular by organizing an intergovernmental consultation meeting on the occasion of the Regional Conference of Higher Education in Latin America and the Caribbean (Córdoba, Argentina, 11-14 June 2018), in coordination with the Latin American and Caribbean Group (GRULAC);

4. *Authorizes* the Executive Board to take appropriate measures, if any, for the successful convening of this conference;

5. *Calls* for the necessary extrabudgetary funding.

Draft

Education Commission Paper-Updated Figures in Draft Resolutions of 39C/5 Volume 1 concerning Major Programme I following the adoption of the provisional budget ceiling at the Joint Commission meeting



91000 –

Draft Resolution for Major Programme 1- Education

The General Conference

1. Authorizes the Director General :

(c) to allocate for this purpose for the period 2018-2019 the integrated budget amount under all sources of funds of \$396,815,900, of which \$75,802,000 to be allocated the seven education-related category 1 institutes.

01100-

Draft Resolution for the International Bureau of Education (IBE)

The General Conference,

3. *Takes note* that the integrated budget for the IBE for the period 2018-2019 is \$10,217,200 and *authorizes* the Director-General to provide support to the Bureau by granting a financial allocation of \$ 5,069,400 from the regular budget of Major Programme I;
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01200-

Draft Resolution for the UNESCO International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP)

The General Conference,

2. *Takes note* that the integrated budget for the IIEP for the period 2018-2019 is \$44,201,900 and *authorizes* the Director-General to support the operation of the Institute by providing a financial allocation of \$ 5,360,000 from the regular budget of Major Programme I;
-

01300-

Draft Resolution for the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL)

The General Conference,

3. *Takes note* that the integrated budget for the UIL for the period 2018-2019 is \$8,479,700 and *authorizes* the Director-General to provide support to the Institute by granting a financial allocation of \$ 1,962,900 from the regular budget of Major Programme I;
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01400-

Draft Resolution for the UNESCO Institute for Information Technologies in Education (IITE)

The General Conference,

3. *Takes note* that the integrated budget for the IITE for the period 2018-2019 is \$1,898,700 and *authorizes* the Director-General to provide support to the Institute by granting a financial allocation of \$ 898,700 from the regular budget of Major Programme I;
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01500 –

Draft Resolution for the UNESCO International Institute for Capacity Building in Africa (IICBA)

The General Conference,

4. *Takes note* that the integrated budget for the IICBA for the period 2018-2019 is \$4,480,700 and *authorizes* the Director-General to provide support to the Institute by granting a financial allocation of \$ 2,480,700 from the regular budget of Major Programme I;
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01600-

Draft Resolution for the UNESCO International Institute for Higher Education in Latin America and the Caribbean (IESALC)

The General Conference,

3. *Takes note* that the integrated budget for the IESALC for the period 2018-2019 is \$3,170,000 and *authorizes* the Director-General to support the Institute by providing a financial allocation of \$ 2,170,000 from the regular budget of Major Programme I;
-

01700-

Draft Resolution for the UNESCO Mahatma Gandhi Institute of Education for Peace and Sustainable Development (MGIEP) for Higher Education in Latin America and the Caribbean (IESALC)

The General Conference,

4. *Takes note* that the integrated budget for the IESALC for the period 2018-2019 is \$3,353,800 and *authorizes* the Director-General to provide support to the Institute by granting a financial allocation of \$ 353,800 from the regular budget of Major Programme I;
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Appendix C

The Education Commission Delegation

The Delegation (Joe Samuels, Ghaleeb Jeppie, Palesa Tyobeka, Nkosinathi Sishi and Bavelile Hlongwa (with the Director of the IBE Institute,

