



## International Conference of NGOs

December 17-19, 2024

### Candidacy for the presidency of the NGO-UNESCO Liaison Committee

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#### Letter of Intent

*I hereby present my candidacy for the presidency of the NGO-UNESCO Liaison Committee following my renewed desire to foster the contribution of the organization to which I belong — the World Federation of Scientific Workers — as well as my contribution, to develop the partnership between UNESCO and non-governmental organizations. Cooperation has become particularly necessary for the mobilization of civil society on a global scale, in times threatened by crisis – health, environmental, security, etc. – and wars around the world.*

*A teacher and researcher since the beginning of the 1980s, my life as an academic has been concomitantly punctuated by my commitments within civil society, both at the trade union level and in the framework of various non-governmental organizations—Moroccan and international—active in the fields of education, employment, science, gender equality, and human rights in general, particularly for the right of access to the common good that is drinking water.*

*First of all, in the ranks of the National Union of Higher Education (SNE-SUP) in my country, Morocco, I campaigned for quality education and efficient scientific research, oriented towards the achievement of society's interests, based on the consideration that access to knowledge, like to health care or a healthy environment, is part of the common goods of humanity.*

*Teaching as a professor has strengthened my conviction that without school and a quality education system, integrating all children of a nation, especially young girls, there can be no inclusive and sustainable development. Such a conviction is forged in particular by my African experience, Moroccan in this case, where an education deficit – taken in a broad sense – is a real obstacle to progress. The same is true of scientific research and access to scientific results, which represent the basis of my associative commitment. This shall be a main subject of my work, in shared responsibility, as head of the Liaison Committee.*

*It's in this same sense that I consider that the right to universal access to water is an even more essential component of human development, as it facilitates the education of young girls and frees women from the "drudgery of fetching" which is still a fact in too many regions of the world. Like many other UNESCO missions, it is also a major subject for greater mobilization of NGOs, especially since access to water will be, over the coming decades, one of the determinants of peace in the world.*

*As a simple member or leader of numerous associations for years, I have learned the meaning of listening, consultation, and collective work. For me, this will be one of the keys to even more constructive and effective cooperation with UNESCO.*

*As President of the Liaison Committee of UNESCO's NGO Partners – if such an honor were bestowed on me – I shall do my utmost to further strengthen cooperation with States and their National Commissions, as well as with governing bodies in Paris, or field offices, to promote greater involvement of NGOs in the various ongoing and future programs, facilitate collective work, strengthen and monitor joint activities.*

*As an activist for world peace, inclusive and equitable human development, the preservation of the environment and biodiversity, gender equality, and respect for all cultures and beliefs, I shall uphold UNESCO's values for the promotion of education, the development of science, the development of the environment, culture, and communication, in a perspective of inclusion and pacification within societies and between nations.*

*I am also committed to listening to the NGOs represented at the Liaison Committee, to contribute to the success of the projects and other initiatives they support, and to respond to their grievances. I also pledge to develop any action aimed at broadening the geographical horizon of the structure over which I wish to have the honor to preside, so that UNESCO's values may be better known wherever it is possible to convey words of peace and dialogue, and even where, for the moment, this seems difficult, not to say impossible.*

*Also, as an Arab and a native of an African country, I am committed to including Africa – in particular, as far as education and access to knowledge are concerned– in my priorities for action and ensuring that African and Arab NGOs are more involved, among the others, in the activities of the Liaison Committee as well as in the achievement of UNESCO's objectives in their respective geographical space, and beyond.*

*Mehdi Lahlou  
Rabat, November 15, 2024*