

Recommendations of the International Conference of NGOs 2022 (ICNGO 2022)

The International Conference of NGOs met at UNESCO Headquarters and online from 14 to 16 December 2022 on the theme of “*Breaking barriers – What role for civil society organisations towards a sustainable future?*”.

Gathered as a group with shared ideals, **the International Conference of NGOs,** *Bearing in mind UNESCO's Constitution and mission that "As a specialised agency of the United Nations, UNESCO (...) contributes to the building of peace, the eradication of poverty, and sustainable development and intercultural dialogue through education, the sciences, culture, communication and information"; Ref. (41C/4)*

Recalling the UNESCO Medium-Term Strategy for 2022-2029 (41C/4);

Reaffirming the commitment to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

Further reaffirming the essential role of NGOs, as actors of civil society, in the development and implementation of UNESCO's programmes in its five fields of competence (Education, Natural Sciences, Social and Human Sciences, Culture, Communication and Information) and in supporting individuals and communities at risk of marginalisation and ensuring the inclusion of the diverse NGOs voices.

Recognising the historically unprecedented global context created by climate change, including disaster and forced migration, and the health crisis affecting all populations;

Expressing concern over wars, conflicts, and violence in many parts of the world, which threaten peace and sustainable development of all countries and peoples, and which exacerbates the existential threat to the world's most vulnerable;

Noting the rising political polarisation and the urgent need to act collectively in the face of worsening inequalities and poverty to build a more inclusive, equal, and informed global community;

Thanking the outgoing members of the NGO-UNESCO Liaison Committee, under the Chairpersonship of Mr Davide Grosso, for their tireless work and the success of a multitude of activities and initiatives;

Restating the high regard of all NGOs in official partnership for the Director-General, Mrs Audrey Azoulay, for her achievements and the continuous support of the NGO-UNESCO Liaison Committee; and

Recognising that the NGO-UNESCO Liaison Committee plays a fostering role in the cooperation with UNESCO through the network of NGOs in Official Partnership and acts as a catalyst for collective cooperation;

Recommends to the Liaison Committee:

- To continue the work undertaken by the Liaison Committee in the 2020-2022 mandate on strengthening partnership with the National Commissions for UNESCO and on broadening

the participation of civil society in the International Decade for Indigenous Languages and the Ocean Decade, as well as the implementation of the Directives.

- To establish a stronger, more effective, and more meaningful engagement of youth representation from NGOs in the activities led by the Liaison Committee, as well as fostering their closer engagement in UNESCO activities, including considering the reservation of a seat for youth-led participation in the Liaison Committee
- To maintain and strengthen the relationship with the Collective Consultation of NGOs on Education 2030 (CCNGO-Education 2030), recognising the unique opportunities provided by the *ex officio* seat held by the Liaison Committee
- To consider the following themes (in alphabetical order), as well as the programmatic priorities of UNESCO in line with the Director General's indication to this effect, when organising international forums as requested by the Directives:
 - Art, Science, and Technology in Africa
 - Artificial Intelligence and Youth
 - Climate
 - Culture as a pillar of the Sustainable Development Goals
 - Education (including relating to Sustainable Development, Protection and Education for Early Childhood, the Right to Education, and Gender)
 - Peace and Development
 - Peace, Nonviolence, and Human Rights Education
 - Women and Girls
 - Youth in Agriculture in Africa

With regards to the functioning of the Committee;

- To continue to define clear, timely, and relevant processes for advancing the agenda of the community of NGOs and the Liaison Committee, including, where appropriate, activities, working groups and other mechanisms for engagement;
- To consider, in cooperation with the Secretariat, reflecting on improving the Rules of Procedure, including the possible use of an online platform for the elections and the number of candidates standing for election from different regions;
- To implement a financial strategy to secure the financial standing of the Committee better and provide for additional activities;
- To consider methods of communication for more effective coordination of NGOs and more timely communication regarding events and opportunities for NGO participation;
- To encourage the participation of Member States and National Commissions in Liaison Committee activities; and
- To consider the full and formal adoption of digital voting processes in the Rules of Procedure

With regards to the facilitation of NGOs in Official Partnership

- To consider carrying out a thematic mapping of NGOs in official partnership, in consultation and cooperation with the Secretariat;
- To consider making available to NGOs relevant information concerning the functioning of UNESCO and the Liaison Committee, strengthening what currently exists on the Committee's website;
- To facilitate access to a meeting room in Paris to allow, where appropriate, group meetings of NGOs;
- To support, as appropriate, projects for the celebration of International Days prepared and implemented by groups of NGOs (include, for example, International Day of the Girl Child, International Day of Peace, International Day of Education, Global Day of Parents etc.), while ensuring a pluralism of engagement and participation;

- To consider the proposal for an event on the subject of intercultural and interreligious dialogue through education; and
- To further consider action related to the Science, Technology, and Innovation webinar held in 2022.

Recalling that the Liaison Committee does not replace the advocacy and actions of NGOs, but offers a space for synergy and a spokesperson for collective action, **the International Conference of NGOs calls on NGOs in Official Partnership:**

- To ensure a voluntary financial contribution is made per the requests of the Liaison Committee, to ensure the ability to carry out its work; and
- To undertake, in the case of the establishment of a communication mechanism such as a newsletter or blog, to supply the content in terms of information on their NGO's activities, actions, and projects