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Press Release

REGIONAL MEETING OF AFRICAN NATIONAL COMMISSIONS FOR UNESCO ON UNESCO'S GLOBAL PRIORITY AFRICA PROGRAMME

11th – 14th SEPTEMBER 2022, ACCRA

INTRODUCTION

The Ghana Commission for UNESCO will welcome next week, African National Commissions for UNESCO in Accra to participate in a three-day meeting on UNESCO's Global Priority Africa Flagship Programme, from 11th – 14th September 2022 at the Tang Palace Hotel. The theme for the meeting is “*Mobilizing Partnership for the Global Priority Africa Programme*”.

The meeting is to bring together the National Commissions (NatComs), as key stakeholders of the Global Priority Africa programme to deliberate upon Africa's collective actions towards a renewed implementation agenda.

The Vice President of the Republic of Ghana, H.E. Alhaji Dr. Mahamudu Bawumia, will open the meeting.

An Accra Declaration on Global Priority Africa by Secretaries-General of National Commissions for UNESCO is envisaged at the end of the three-day Conference to commit Secretaries-General and their respective Governments to the strategic actions to be agreed upon in the implementation process.

OBJECTIVES OF THE MEETING

The objectives of the programme are as follows:

- a) To raise awareness of the five flagships for National Commissions to be able to



- b) To engage National Commissions and experts to share experiences on best practices and to share ideas on the implementation process.
- c) To capacitate National Commissions in Member States become effective national champions in the Global Priority Africa flagships in terms of mobilisation for partnerships, resources and advocacy.

ORGANIZATION OF THE MEETING

The meeting will be organized in both Plenary and Working Sessions to achieve the objectives and outcomes set out for this meeting.

PARTICIPANTS

The conference has registered over seventy participants from African NatComs, representatives from other sister NatComs (Azerbaijan, Canada, France and Germany), Directors and staff from UNESCO Headquarters and Regional Offices in Africa.

UNESCO PRIORITY AFRICA PROGRAMME

UNESCO has since 1984 defined the African continent as a priority in the implementation of its mandate by providing responses to the continent's developmental challenges. Currently, key challenges are in the domains of population growth, youth unemployment, and inclusive development; Education and knowledge sharing; Climate Change and environment; Africa's Cultural Renaissance, Heritage, and History; and peace, governance, and democracy among others.

UNESCO's support to Africa under its Global Priority Africa Programme is geared towards 'an integrated, prosperous, and peaceful Africa, driven by its own citizens, and representing a dynamic force in the global arena' - an objective which also aligns with the broad continental vision of the Africa Union – 'The Africa We Want', Vision 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The implementation of actions regarding Global Priority Africa in all UNESCO's Programmes is guided by a framework known as "The Operational Strategy for Priority Africa".

The current Operational Strategy for Priority Africa 2022-2029 has been developed based on consultations with Member States, including the UNESCO Africa Group, programme sectors at Headquarters, field offices in Africa and the Bureau of Strategic

Planning. It also considered the recommendations of the evaluation of the previous Strategy 2014-2021 conducted by the Internal Oversight Service (IOS) of UNESCO.

This Operational Strategy aims at achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the United Nations' Agenda 2030 and the African Union's Agenda 2063 "The Africa We Want", in UNESCO's fields of competence.

Five (5) flagship Programmes have been adopted by member states during the 41st General Conference of UNESCO in Paris in 2021. The Flagships are as follows:

- Campus Africa: Reinforcing Higher Education in Africa
- The General History of Africa (GHA) as a catalyst for achieving Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda
- Fostering Cultural Heritage and Capacity Development
- Harnessing new and emerging technologies for sustainable development in Africa including the implementation of the recommendation on the ethics of Artificial intelligence.
- Enhance open science, reinforce capacity building in basic and applied sciences, and scientific research to strengthen innovation and technology development and use in ocean science, climate change resilience, and water resource management in Africa.

Ghana Commission for UNESCO

Situated in the Ministry of Education, Accra, the Ghana Commission for UNESCO (Ghana NatCom) is a specialized agency of the government subvented under the Ministry of Education with the mandate to foster multilateral relations between UNESCO and its member states and Ghana.

The NatCom started as a Committee for UNESCO Affairs in 1953 when Ghana became an Associate Member of UNESCO. Ghana attained full membership of UNESCO on 11th April, 1958. Cabinet then approved the reconstitution of the Committee under the new title "Ghana National Commission for UNESCO.

The mission of the Natcom is "to promote UNESCO's objectives and ideals in Ghana as a contribution to global peace, poverty alleviation, sustainable development and intercultural dialogue through Education, the Sciences, Culture, Communication and Information. Its functions among other include:



- Serves as a link between UNESCO and Ghana.
- Acts as an advisory body to the government in determining policy with regard to UNESCO and its programmes.
- Serves as a liaison agency with organizations, institutions and individuals in Ghana and other member states who are involved in the activities of UNESCO.
- Disseminates information from and to UNESCO.
- Exchanges information and experiences with its counterparts in Member States of the Organization.