



# REGIONAL MEETING OF AFRICA NATIONAL COMMISSIONS FOR UNESCO

11th - 14th September 2022

Tang Palace Hotel, Accra



# FINAL REPORT

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Convened under the leadership of H.E. Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo Addo, President of the Republic of Ghana, the Regional Meeting of African National Commissions for UNESCO was an initiative by the Government of Ghana, UNESCO and partners to strengthen the relevance, effectiveness, and the overall strategic positioning of the Global Priority Africa Programme towards addressing Africa's current challenges.

The meeting, the first of its kind on the Continent in over a decade, was attended in presentia by 44 African National Commissions and representatives of governments of African Member States and the Africa Union, with many other partners following online via webcast. Its overall goal was to converge the common strategic priorities of National Commissions for UNESCO in Africa and outline a clear agenda for Africa to contribute to implementing the Global Priority Africa Programme as elaborated in the new Operational Strategy (2022 – 2029), adopted by the General Conference at its 41st Session.

Ghana organized this meeting in support of UNESCO and partners' objective of strengthening collaboration at the national, sub-regional and regional levels in the implementation of the Global Priority Africa Programme. The meeting was also to improve the understanding of the Programme among National Commissions and to demonstrate its relevance in our collective march towards the SDGs. It was also to contribute to the Africa Union's Vision 2063 towards "an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, driven by its own citizens and representing a dynamic force in the global arena".

The meeting, convened in Plenary and Breakout sessions, discussed issues emanating from the six flagship programmes of Global Priority Africa:

- biodiversity conservation for peace and development in Africa*
- transforming education to accelerate progress on SDG targets in Africa*
- the pedagogical use of the General History of Africa Project*
- the application of emerging technologies and in particular Artificial Intelligence and its appropriateness in an African context;*
- rethinking heritage management in Africa*
- media pluralism for peace and development in Africa.*

Member States resolved to make the meeting of African National Commissions a biennial activity to be hosted voluntarily by countries.

The Meeting concluded with an Accra Declaration on Global Priority Africa (Annex I); a blueprint of how National Commissions will interface with their respective governments and UNESCO to support Global Priority Africa.



# 1.0 OPENING CEREMONY

The regional meeting of Africa National Commissions for UNESCO was held in Accra from 11th -14th September 2022. The Opening Ceremony under the Chairmanship of Her Excellency Anna Bossman, Ghana's Ambassador to France and Permanent Delegate to UNESCO also saw the participation of H. E. Nana Addo Danquah Akuffo Addo, President of the Republic of Ghana whose goodwill message was video delivered (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IrhEyZAIYuc>).

Among other key dignitaries represented at the ceremony were the Ministers for Education, Science and Culture in Ghana; the Assistant Director General

for Africa Department, UNESCO; Representative of the Africa Union; Directors of UNESCO Offices in the Africa Region, Representatives of 44 National Commissions for UNESCO including 36 Secretaries-General; Representatives of other United Nations Offices in Ghana, Civil Society Organizations and partners; representative of the Development Partners and the diplomatic community in Ghana.



## 1.1 OPENING REMARKS BY H.E ANNA BOSSMAN, AMBASSADOR OF GHANA TO FRANCE AND PORTUGAL AND PERMANENT DELEGATE TO UNESCO

H.E. Anna Bossman expressed her gratitude for being chosen for her role at the Africa Regional Meeting of UNESCO National Commissions. She was thrilled to be a part of the meeting's celebration of the significant accomplishment made by the Ghana Commission for UNESCO under the Secretary General's direction.

She emphasised that UNESCO's National Commissions are an integral part of the organisation, with a constitutional responsibility to facilitate connections and interfaces with national-level governmental entities.

She stated that the topic of the Global Priority Africa programme is thought to provide Africans new motivation to increase the program's relevance, efficacy, and overall strategic positioning so that it can guide stakeholders to solve Africa's current challenges.

She concluded by extending a warm welcome to everyone in attendance, calling on the delegates and Secretary-Generals in attendance to engage in discussion and offer helpful criticism in order to create a clear agenda for National Commissions in Africa to rethink Global Priority Africa for the benefit of Africa.





## 1.2. WELCOME ADDRESS BY DR IBRAHIM MOHAMMED AWAL, MINISTER FOR TOURISM, ARTS & CULTURE, REPUBLIC OF GHANA



The National Commissions of UNESCO who were present for the regional meeting were welcomed with enthusiasm by Dr. Awal. He expressed gratitude to the event's organizers for their efforts in making it happen. Dr. Awal emphasized the impact that the COVID-19 epidemic, conflicts, and poverty continue to have on the social and economic systems of many nations, including Ghana, in his speech and praised the UN and its development collaborators for their efforts to ensure that education, particularly in Africa, returned to normal.

To ensure inclusivity, learning quality, teacher quality, digital learning, access to low-cost connectivity, and enough budget, governments need to prioritize education management while young people must actively participate in all education policy processes, Dr Awal stressed. In light of the fact that investing in education is an asset in the sustainability and well-being of our society, our children, and the planet, he also spoke about bolstering the funding sources for education in support of the 2030 target.

To ensure inclusivity, learning quality, teacher quality, digital learning, access to low-cost connectivity, and enough budget, governments need to prioritize education management while young people must actively participate in all education policy processes ...

He reminded listeners that the AU Agenda 2063 calls for an interconnected continent, with the rule of law, democracy, respect for human rights, and good governance as its pillars. In order to successfully assist the implementation of the Operational Strategy for Priority Africa for 2022-2029 and find solutions to many of the difficulties facing the Continent, he also advocated strengthening UNESCO field offices in Africa.

Dr. Awal concluded his welcome remarks by urging participants to actively engage in the meeting's deliberations and visit the country's many tourist attractions.



### 1.3. STATEMENT BY MR FIRMIN EDOUARD MATOKO, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR-GENERAL FOR PRIORITY AFRICA AND EXTERNAL RELATIONS AT UNESCO



Mr. Firmin Edouard Matoko also spoke at the first gathering of its sort to take place in West Africa, the African National Commissions meeting. He commended the Ghana Commission for UNESCO for providing a venue for African NATCOMs to come together, reaffirm their commitment to the Global Priority Africa program, and reflect.

In relation to the updated implementation agenda, he emphasized that African NATCOMs are major players in the Global Priority Africa agenda. He reviewed UNESCO's past while highlighting its wish to see the Global Priority Africa 2022–2029 program implemented successfully.

He concluded by expressing his appreciation for the gathering of NATCOMs, who are important Global Priority Africa program stakeholders, to deliver Africa's joint activities towards a new implementation agenda.



### 1.4. SOLIDARITY MESSAGE - MR SEYMUR FATALIYEV, SECRETARY-GENERAL OF AZERBAIJAN NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR UNESCO



Azerbaijan attaches particular importance to promoting cultural diversity, multiculturalism, and tolerance, hosting world events and initiatives to promote intercultural dialogue ...



In his solidarity message, Mr Fataliyev emphasized that Azerbaijan has become a reliable partner in ensuring world peace and security through its participation in international platforms and within the framework of UNESCO.

According to him, Azerbaijan's National Commission for UNESCO has continued its activities in all priority areas of the organization, establishing extensive relations in the fields of culture, education, science, information, and communication.

The country has become an influential member and donor state, contributing to projects in Africa and the protection of intangible cultural heritage in Bangladesh and Guatemala, he said. He mentioned that Azerbaijan attaches particular importance to promoting cultural diversity, multiculturalism, and tolerance, hosting world events and initiatives to promote

intercultural dialogue, such as the Baku Process and Luanda Process.

Mr Fataliyev stressed that the country has also initiated a training program with ADA University and UNESCO for African Member States to further develop cooperation, inform participants about acts of aggression and vandalism, and share the truth about restoration and construction work on Azerbaijani lands liberated from occupation.

Bringing his message to an end, he mentioned that Azerbaijan has supported the African World Heritage Fund through the UNESCO-Azerbaijan Trust Fund and has strengthened its relations with African countries during its chairmanship of the Non-Aligned Movement as well as taking the initiative to hold a special session of the UN General Assembly on the fight against COVID-19, which was supported by more than 150 countries.



## 1.5. MESSAGE BY H.E NANA ADDO DANKWA AKUFO-ADDO, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF GHANA



He reminded participants that in the face of current global trends, it has become important to revise the continental aspirations and strategic focus of the Global Priority Africa Programme.

The President stressed Ghana's commitment to the work of UNESCO in particular, the Global Priority Africa Programme which Ghana made significant contributions to in the early 1980s. He reminded participants that in the face of current global trends, it has become important to revise the continental aspirations and strategic focus of the Global Priority Africa Programme.

Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo Addo recounted the successful relationship between UNESCO and Ghana as far back as 1962 as well as Ghana's contribution to UNESCO's work. He mentioned Ghana's role in hosting the Africa Regional Centre for Educational Information and Research and being the first African country south of the Sahara to be elected Chairman of the Executive Board and the first African Country to have a lady representative on the Executive Board of UNESCO.

He expressed his joy at the opportunity for Africa National Commissions to use the meeting to address the challenges confronting the continent. He further congratulated UNESCO for the sterling contributions over the years in the operationalization of the UN Action Plan on Safety of Journalists and the fight against impunity.

With Accra being named the UNESCO World Book Capital for 2023, the President was hopeful that Ghana will use the year long event to develop the book and creative arts industry. He concluded with warmest invitation extended to all to participate in the Accra World Book Capital event from 23rd April 2023.



## 1.6. STATEMENT BY THE GUEST OF HONOUR- DR YAW OSEI ADUTWUM, MINISTER FOR EDUCATION



He encouraged participants to engage in the discussions on the issues related to the Global Priority Africa and birth the Declaration of Secretaries-General within the context of re-imagining Global Priority Africa for the benefit of the Continent.

The Hon. Minister for Education, Dr Yaw Osei Adutwum, expressed his excitement at the presence of a united Africa National Commissions for UNESCO in Africa to discuss salient issues related to the UNESCO Global Priority Africa Programme.

He was pleased that among the many subjects to be discussed is the discussion on opportunities offered by digital learning in recent years within the perspectives of the role of National Commissions.

He encouraged participants to engage in the discussions on the issues related to the Global Priority Africa and birth the Declaration of Secretaries-General within the context of re-imagining Global Priority Africa for the benefit of the Continent.

The Minister highlighted efforts by Ghana to promote the ideals of UNESCO. Notable among them were UNESCO Man and Biosphere programme, African Network of Biosphere Reserves (AfriMAB), and heritage management. Dr Yaw Osei Adutwum urged UNESCO to deepen its work on the Routes of Enslaved People's Project. To consolidate the gains made, Ghana has formed the Ghana Heritage Committee (WHC), he concluded.



### PLENARY SESSION

*Harnessing Priority Africa Program for Socio-Economic Progress: Key Issues, Challenges and Opportunities*

The three-day conference was organized in both plenary and breakout sessions. There were six plenary and breakout sessions devoted to various items on the conference agenda. The sessions adopted the usual presentation and discussions methodology where speakers and various segmented audiences engaged on specific themes and topics emanating from the five UNESCO Global Priority Africa flagship programme.

The representative from the Africa Department at UNESCO Ms. Jaya Conhye-Soobrayen started the presentations on the topic **Harnessing Priority Africa Program for Socio-Economic Progress: Key Issues, Challenges and Opportunities.**

*Her Presentation centered on the Operational Strategy for the Priority Africa programme 2022-2029, developed to act as a catalyst to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals*

*(SDGs) and the Africa Union Agenda 2063 'The Africa We want',. The UNESCO Operational Strategy also support the renewed vision of 'An integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, driven by its own citizens, representing a dynamic force in the international arena'.*

Other highlights of the presentation were on specific themes of the Global Priority Africa Programme developed in consultation with Member States with a view to innovatively address the major challenges of the Continent. Among some of the major challenges recounted for deliberation were demographic growth and the need to steer the continent on the path of sustainable development; knowledge sharing and the relevance of education in Africa. Environmental concerns and the need to protect the planet for sustainable development were key issues identified as well as cultural heritage, peace, and democracy.



## 2.0 BREAKOUT SESSIONS

There were six breakout sessions in all with three running concurrently. Participants chose two of the sessions to attend and Moderators presented their reports on the second day. The summaries of the reports are as follows:

### 2.1 TRANSFORMING EDUCATION TO ACCELERATE PROGRESS ON SDG4 TARGETS IN AFRICA



Speaker:  
**Mr. Ali-Mohamed Sinane**

Moderator:  
**Rosy Agoi (SG, Uganda)**

#### Introduction:

Mr. Ali-Mohamed Sinane, a program specialist from the UNESCO Multi-Sectoral Regional

Office for West Africa's Cluster Education Planning & SDG4 Coordination, spoke during this breakout session.

The discussion for the session was based primarily on the Futures of Education Report, which calls for a new social contract for education. This social contract enjoins us to think differently about learning and the relationships between students, teachers, knowledge, and the world. The foundational principles of the report are:

- Assuring the right to quality education throughout life and
- Strengthening education as a public endeavour and a common good.

Some of the key drivers for transforming education were highlighted:

- *Pedagogy should be organized around the principles of cooperation, collaboration, and solidarity;*

- *Curricula should emphasize ecological, intercultural and interdisciplinary learning that supports students to access and produce knowledge while also developing their capacity to critique and apply it;*
- *Teaching should be further professionalized as a collaborative endeavour where teachers are recognized for their work as knowledge producers and key figures in educational and social transformation;*
- *Schools should be protected educational sites because of the inclusion, equity and individual and collective well-being they support –and also reimagined to better promote the transformation of the world towards a more just, equitable and sustainable futures and;*
- *We should enjoy and expand the educational opportunities that take place throughout life and in different cultural and social spaces.*





## Discussion Session

- Participants agreed that Africa and the world cannot transform their education systems without investing heavily in digital technology. As such, lessons from the Covid-19 pandemic must guide us to make our education systems resilient to withstand future crises.
- In addition, it was agreed that the mobilization of domestic resources to address the funding gap in the education sector must be pursued by all African countries because funding support from the Global North is no longer assured.
- All agreed that indigenisation of our education systems is the surest way to go and NATCOMS have a key role to play in transforming education.

## Conclusion

In concluding this session, participants agreed to share the report and lessons learned from this meeting with their governments as a first step, and continue to provide their governments with rich information from UNESCO's networks regarding the many good and innovative practices or models that can be found in Africa.

## 2.2 BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION FOR PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA

Speaker:

**Professor Alfred Oteng-Yeboah**

Moderator:

**Ms. Elia Bila (SG, Mozambique)**

### Introduction:

The presentation's topic was Biodiversity conservation for peace and development in Africa, and the speaker was Professor Alfred Oteng-Yeboah, a Ghanaian environmentalist and a professor from the University of Ghana, Legon.

### Information Session:

Prof. Oteng stated at the start of the highly interactive session that our planet is changing, and people are to blame for these changes. Desertification, city and its underlying genetic resources, land degradation and desertification, and climate change and the associated rising global warming are the three most delicate and significant environmental challenges facing the world today.

He said that to address these challenges, action and efforts are required at the international, regional, and global levels. He pointed out that the likelihood

of disputes and tensions between nations increases in the face of environmental problems, which is why we must uphold and guarantee peace, development, and biodiversity protection in Africa.

Prof. Oteng-Yeboah underlined the necessity to take a serious view of biological variety, noting that it is not just a natural science idea but also a notion of the social sciences by displaying two maps—the political map and the distribution of biological resources/ecological systems across Africa. It was noted that everyone in this world depends entirely on the Earth's ecosystems and the services they provide, such as food, water, climate regulation, disease management, spiritual fulfilment, and aesthetic enjoyment resources.

The preservation or restoration of the natural environment is the goal





of biodiversity conservation, according to Prof. Oteng. He explained how the open ocean and sea regions, biosphere reserves, protected national parks, and Ramsar sites are examples of in situ conservation areas in Africa, while ex-situ habitats include museums, orchards, research gardens, and swimming pools.

By understanding biodiversity conservation, as National Commissions for UNESCO, we are encouraged to assist in preventing and minimizing the direct and indirect drivers of biodiversity loss in developmental activities but rather work to promote its conservation.

He asked that we engage the public and community through awareness education so they are part of the programs, adding that if we have to designate any areas as biosphere reserves, we need to get the consent of the local people as they depend on these for their livelihood.

He also said strong institutions that defend the rule of law are required, especially where politicians conflict with efforts to conserve biodiversity.

### Conclusion

Countries must ensure that environmental impact assessments are carried out before undertaking any infrastructural development or exploitation of resources in protected areas.

He also asked that countries ensure that young people play a significant part in biodiversity conservation and the creation of green jobs.

## 2.3 PEDAGOGICAL USE OF THE GENERAL HISTORY OF AFRICA (GHA) PROJECT

Speaker:

**Dr. James Gichiah Njogu**

Moderator:

**Dr Mohammed Kamanda (SG, Sierra Leone)**

### Introduction:

The speaker for this session was Dr. James Gichiah Njogu, Deputy SG, Kenyan NATCOM, and the moderator was Dr. Mohammed Kamanda, SG, Sierra Leonean NATCOM. Dr Njogu shared Kenya's experiences in its development of the General History of Africa (GHA) Mainstreaming Matrices.

The nine central pillars of the GHA educational matrices are;

- Africa, the origins of humanity and civilizations;
- Civilizations and cultures of ancient Africa;
- States, kingdoms, empires, and other forms of social and political organization;

- Servitude, slave trade, slavery, and liberation movements;
- Internal dynamics from the 17th to the 19th century;
- Colonization, and resistance and liberation movements;
- Emergence of new African states and construction of the African Union;
- Africa and new challenges and
- African diasporas

### Information Session:

In the development of the GHA Mainstreaming Matrices, Dr. Njogu noted that the 9 fundamental pillars of the Competency-based Curriculum (CBC) in Kenya have been scoped and ordered

throughout the various levels of education.

In addition, to integrate GHA into the formal, non-formal, and informal dimensions of learning, he explained that curriculum developers are expected to use these matrices as a resource.

Since the matrices offer advice on how non-formal and informal platforms can be used to supplement the GHA messages to educationists as they deliver lessons in various subjects, it is anticipated that they will help curriculum developers be intentional in identifying GHA concepts that can be integrated in the various subjects as they design curricula.

### Discussion Session:

Participants concurred that while taking into account the cooperative efforts of all parties involved in the development of a curriculum and keeping in mind the unique characteristics of other African countries, other African countries should consider lessons and next steps from the Kenyan experience. Additionally, GHA curricula should cover more than only the forces, consequences, and lessons of the slave trade. It should integrate beliefs, knowledge, and real-world skills to help pupils transcend their racial stereotypes and biases.

### Conclusion:

He encouraged all African countries to make this a part of their curriculum.

It is significant that the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development found that the GHA materials may be used in the manner they are while creating the Kenyan curriculum. Through a comparison with the GHA index, it was determined that the social science curriculum in Kenya already included some of the broad history of Africa before the work with CBC began. Kenya was changing its curriculum; thus, the chance was used to incorporate the GHA content more thoroughly. Thus, countries should begin with mapping existing curricula with the GHA index to anticipate any possible amendment.



## 2.4 ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN AFRICA: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES IN A CHANGING WORLD



Speaker:

**Prof. Amal El Fallah  
Seghrouchni**

Moderator:

**Mr. Jamal Eddine El Aloua  
(SG, Morocco)**

### Introduction:

Prof. Seghrouchni told the audience that the AI Centre (AI Movement) is a proposed category II facility at Morocco's Mohammed VI University. While advancing theoretical and practical research, it is promoting AI initiatives in Africa. This is against the background that in Africa, AI is thought to be worth 4.5 billion.

### Information Session:

Prof. Seghrouchni clarified the meaning of AI by stating that it is a tool for reflection on our culture and that it uses the senses of movement, interaction, artificial learning, and reasoning. It also makes use of algorithms, data, and a lot of memory, which opens a wide range of potential scenarios. She indicated that some of the advantages and opportunities





of AI include improvements in medical and scientific research, the use of drones and robots for agriculture, which analyses soil and plant health, addressing educational inequalities—some drones are used to detect aggressive situations in schools—prevention of crime—biometric data and situation prediction.

#### Discussion Session:

#### *Impediments to the growth of AI in Africa*

Prof. Seghrouchni found it regrettable that societal problems like dehumanisation and the elimination of public jobs, technical problems with data and algorithms, financial problems, and talent problems are only a few of the difficulties faced by artificial challenges.

She emphasised that ethical concerns such as personal privacy, performance, equity, transparency, security, environmental sustainability, and strategic autonomy must be considered when delivering AI in Africa. The discussions also focused on whether Africa is prepared for AI and how its spread will influence employment and career opportunities. Participants expressed concern once more about the infrastructure readiness, capacity, and utilisation of African talent as well as regarding UNESCO's ability to support

member states and the Africa Union's ability to adopt AI.

In response to the concerns, Prof. Seghrouchni remarked that although there exist a strong perception/fear of job losses, there is evidence of roughly 60 million jobs being created through AI, Data Science, and Automation. She went on to say that to keep up with the rapidly evolving global trends in technology, training and refresher courses are necessary.

She further recommended that Africans create frameworks, strategies, and creative approaches to integrate AI while concentrating on the adoption of UNESCO's Recommendation on the Ethics of AI by African States. In addition, Prof. Seghrouchni urged for the harmonisation of cybersecurity and data protection regulations throughout Africa.

#### Conclusion

In her concluding statement, attendees were reminded of the importance of using AI in a humanistic and ethical manner for research, job creation, and general advancement. African Member states were urged to create appropriate frameworks to prevent misuse, addiction, data privacy issues, and hazardous algorithms while making significant infrastructure investments for AI integration in African curriculum, academic research, and enterprises. To assist knowledge management and the dissemination of AI best practises throughout Africa. She ended on the note that the AI Movement in Morocco is ideally situated to provide the required assistance.



## 2.5 MEDIA PLURALISM FOR DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA

Speaker:

**Dr. Abena Anin Yeboah-Banin**

Moderator:

**Ms. Maimuna Sidibeh (SG, Gambia)**

#### Introduction:

Media Pluralism for Development in Africa was the theme for this session, which was led by Dr. Abena Anin Yeboah-Banin from the University Of Ghana, Legon-Accra, Ghana and moderated by Ms. Maimuna Sidibeh (SG, Gambia).



### Information Session:

The general assumptions that underpinned the presentation were that Africa desires for her people agenda (2063) and plural media is a means to that end. Furthermore, African countries share commonalities in their histories, contemporary life and future and finally, lessons learnt from one African country can extend to others due to these commonalities.

Dr. Abena eloquently underscored the evolvement of media in Ghana by establishing the developmental or progressive strides made by the media. She related this progress to media pluralism as Ghana has witnessed from what in 1993 was a picture of one national broadcaster and some newspapers to nearly 500 radio stations, over 150 TV stations, and several prints as at present.

Dr. Abena also highlighted that media pluralism was key for the practice of sustainable democracy as it creates avenue for citizens to contribute to national discourse. She touched on the negative influence of media on society and corroborated it with a news item which involved a case of murder. Media Pluralism, a capture by economic interest, editorial content, and Regulatory safeguards are the Thematic underpinnings of Media Pluralism as espoused by the speaker. Dr. Abena alluded that there is dominance of political discourse in our media space and supported it with findings by Media Foundation for West Africa (MFWA), which states that about 1/3 of our media channels are owned by political kingpins

and therefore, such outlets influence content aired on their waves.

Concerning a capture by economic interest, the speaker intimated that there are too many radio stations serving a relatively small population, yet there is no support from government or policies to support viability of media. This has motivated the media to literally have to engage in certain things (be it unethical or inappropriate) just to make returns to support production. The speaker, mentioned that the media is forced to import content, hitherto to broadcasting locally tailored content. This, in her submission is likely to influence the behaviour of viewers as they consistently come into contact with such content.

Dr. Abena submitted that the media in Ghana is saddled with challenges posed by the responsibilities of the two regulatory government agencies - National Communication Authority (NCA), which oversees the allocation of frequencies, and the National Media Commission (NMC), which oversees content but the two institutions have no power to call the media to order. Based on the foregoing discussions, the speaker suggested that regulatory frameworks that ensure that free speech and media independence is realised should be effectively implemented. She made a strong argument for a regulation that brings synergy to the oversight responsibilities of the NMC and the NCA because of concentration of media.

### Discussion Session:

Participants called for an expansion and increased funding for state broadcasting. Other attendees also called for professional development for journalists to help them create good content from a holistic perspective. Participants also questioned the value of investigative or undercover journalism. The need to use community radio to promote youth development was common among participants. In the Ghanaian context, Dr Abena called for the passing of the Broadcasting Law.

### Conclusion:

The speaker concluded by calling on media owners and media association to work to ensure that media pluralism supports Africa's development and not derail it.



## 2.6 RETHINKING HERITAGE MANAGEMENT IN AFRICA



Speaker:

**Dr. Pascall Taruvinga**



Moderator:

**Mr. Rod April (SG-Namibia)**

### **Introduction:**

Dr. Pascall Taruvinga spoke during this session, which was moderated by Mr. Rod April (SG-Namibia) and touched on the topic of rethinking heritage management in Africa.

### **Information Session:**

The subject is based on the idea that unique African heritages have more local significance than global or universal substance, hence it is crucial to acknowledge and promote this impact in all facets of African life. To prevent legacy from acting as an island in a sea of difficulties, this calls for multi- and inter-disciplinary methods.

Dr. Taruvinga walked the audience through the development of African heritage management, including indigenous knowledge systems, state-based management systems, world heritage systems, and integrated management systems. Here, the importance of politics, heritage places, conservation and development, and inclusive heritage management was emphasised. A bottom-up agenda for Africa was also underscored, involving stakeholders at the local level.

### **Discussion Session:**

Participants agreed with the notion that in Africa, heritage is first local before universal or international and that heritage must first make sense locally before it is globalised in relation to expert and institutional perspectives vs the views of local populations. As a result, culture, nature, and society are inseparable partners in Africa. So, in order to foster innovation and creativity, conservation strategies should integrate African concepts of conservation. As a result, both the host community and the heritage itself should benefit from the conservation and development of heritage assets.

According to Dr. Taruvinga, the transformation of Africa's legacy landscape is a result of our own dedication to changing the continent's heritage sectors and industries. Therefore, it is necessary to dismantle the ingrained political, legal, social, and cultural barriers in our society, and we should start acting differently in order to anticipate different outcomes in the African heritage sector. Putting the historic industry and sector first is part of this.

Indigenous knowledge systems were also highlighted as a crucial resource that has not been fully utilised in addressing sustainability issues in heritage management. These systems include, among other things, localization and ownership of heritage, development of participatory approaches, social and economic inclusivity, and innovation.

Dr. Taruvinga urged nations to switch from top-down agenda setting to bottom-up agenda setting, where community involvement drives heritage management.

To lessen tensions and disputes at heritage sites where there are legal disputes, the speaker stated that cultural institutions should create strategic means of resolving disagreement at heritage sites.





It was suggested that strategic alliances be created between and among universities, historic institutions, and local communities in order to maximise the advantages of heritage education.

Dr. Taruvinga made important suggestions, such as emphasising the creation of bridges within and for African heritage. Additionally, it is essential to decolonize heritage industries and exert influence over them. There is also a need to investigate heritage management methods from a business perspective. Moreover, nations were urged to develop original and imaginative approaches to managing historic sites. Africans were instructed to include young people and women in historical projects and to use discussion to solve problems rather than resorting to contestations, etc. Communities should once again be given priority in heritage management in order to ensure sustainability. In this regard, communities are to be involved at every level of decision-making.

In addition, it was discussed that heritage institutions should be able to lobby the ministries and government on the importance of heritage and its contribution to the country's GDP to be able to get the necessary support from the government. Member States are encouraged to explore the concept of Smart Heritage. This includes the consideration of smart cities, digitization, and digitalization of heritage sites. It was recommended that there is a need for the capacity of African Heritage Institutions to be built on World Heritage Issues such as preparation of a Nomination Dossier, protection of WHS, and engagement of the youth and women at World Heritage Sites.

The following was highlighted in relation to the issue of restitution and return of cultural properties: create a useful and inclusive collection database; enhance collections facilities and infrastructure; increase capacity on heritage crime intelligence; incentivize and retain capacity; and adopt preventive approaches.



## 3.0 SPECIAL SESSIONS ON CATEGORY II CENTRES AND OTHER UNESCO PROGRAMMES IN GHANA

Representatives of the Category II Centres in Ghana took advantage of this event to inform participants about their organizations.

### 3.1 AFRICA INSTITUTE OF MATHEMATICAL SCIENCES GHANA (AIMS-GHANA) MS. ADELAIDE ASANTEWAA ASANTE



*Ms. Asantewaa urged NATCOMS to work with AIMS on country target training, the creation of satellite campuses, positions for visiting researchers and research associates/postdocs, the Girls in Mathematics and Science Program, the Industry Immersion Program/HIH, and the introduction of courseware in African nations.*

The goal of AIMS Ghana, which was founded in 2018 as a Category II Center of Excellence, has been to lead the development of Africa via creative scientific education, cutting-edge technology, and ground-breaking discoveries. As stated by Ms. Adelaide Asantewaa Asante, Chief Operation Officer, AIMS-Ghana aims to provide the best students in Africa with the tools they need to succeed as independent thinkers, problem solvers, and innovators who can advance the continent's future economic, educational, and scientific independence. Since 2015, AIMS has produced an impressive amount of work across the continent and has Centers of Excellence in Senegal, Ghana, Cameroon, Rwanda, and South Africa, as well as Research Centers and Chairs, Industry Initiatives, Gender Responsive Teacher Training, Quantum Leap

Africa, and the Next Einstein Forum.

She provided an overview of the programs offered by AIMS Ghana, including the MSc. in Mathematical Sciences and the AIMS Master of Mathematics for Teachers (MMST). The development of youth in Africa and beyond is a key component of the AIMS 10 Year Strategic Plan. The emphasis will therefore be on business, employment, economic development, government, NGOs, health, education, and good governance. Ms. Asantewaa urged NATCOMS to work with AIMS on country target training, the creation of satellite campuses, positions for visiting researchers and research associates/postdocs, the Girls in Mathematics and Science Program, the Industry Immersion Program/HIH, and the introduction of courseware in African nations.

### 3.2 THE INSTITUTE FOR EDUCATIONAL PLANNING AND ADMINISTRATION (IEPA) DR. MICHAEL BOAKYE-YIADOM



*IEPA is an organization dedicated to achieving SDG 4, and they believe that working with all stakeholders in partnership is a prerequisite. Any sort of cooperation that may advance IEPA's goals is encouraged.*

The Institute for Educational Planning and Administration's (IEPA) Director General, Dr. Michael Boakye-Yiadom, used the occasion to provide a brief history of the IEPA as well as its goal, vision, and fundamental values. The 1975-founded IEPA is tasked with enhancing the skills of educational leaders, administrators, and planners in the West African sub-region, assisting educational ministries in the sub-region with sector-wide planning, policy development, and implementation, fostering cutting-edge research, innovation, and

consultancy in education service delivery, and providing a forum for and mobilizing educational experts in the sub-region to examine educational issues.

IEPA is an organization dedicated to achieving SDG 4, and they believe that working with all stakeholders in partnership is a prerequisite. Any sort of cooperation that may advance IEPA's goals is encouraged.



### 3.3 THE UNESCO ACCRA WORLD BOOK CAPITAL DESIGNATION MS ERNESTICIA LARTEY ASUINURA



*... projects ... include promoting reading, ... book industry development, promoting creative skills, promoting basic human rights, promoting access to information and books, and promoting the arts and culture ...*

Ghana took the opportunity to inform delegates about the designation of Accra as the World Book Capital city for 2023. The Ghana Book Development Council, the agency responsible for hosting the observation of the World Book Capital, informed participants of activities scheduled for the observation during the title year (April 23, 2023 – April 22, 2024). The observation will be on the theme "Reading to unite minds for social progress." The projects allocated for the title year include promoting reading, promoting reading (provision of infrastructure), book industry development, promoting creative skills, promoting basic human rights, promoting access to information and books, and promoting the arts and culture, all of which are budgeted for at a total cost of USD\$3 million.







## 4.0 FOSTERING COOPERATION AMONG NATIONAL COMMISSIONS FOR UNESCO

### 4.1 COOPERATION WITH NATCOMS – OPPORTUNITIES AND LESSONS

This session featured presentations dedicated to how NATCOMs can work with other NATCOMs and UNESCO designations.

#### *Presentation 1:*

Cooperation with NATCOMS – Opportunities and Lessons

#### *Name of Presenter:*

Miss Jeannine Hausmann, German National Commission)

The German National Commission, during this session, engaged the delegates in a discussion on Cooperation with NATCOMs- Opportunities and Lessons. The German Commission was represented by Miss Jeannine Hausmann.

According to the speaker, the German National Commission has been working with the NatComs for Eastern and Southern Africa since 2008 and 2012, respectively. The partnership aims to support NatComs as they enhance their institutional frameworks, encourage bilateral and international cooperation, and help them become more visible to the public, government agencies, and UNESCO.

According to Ms. Jeanine (Head of Division - International Cooperation and Emerging Topics), the German National Commission supports sub-regional meetings in Eastern and Southern Africa, bilateral cooperation projects, third party sponsored programmes, Youth volunteers, and Special initiatives.

She went on to provide instances of MAB SADC Project Frames supported by the Federal Agency for Nature Conservation. The purpose of this project was to promote the designation of future UNESCO Biosphere Reserves as well as the quality assurance and enhancement of existing UNESCO Biosphere Reserves.

She concluded by urging attendees to look at possibilities like sub-regional National Commission meetings that are important for collaborative endeavours. Indicating that highly engaged partners are necessary for project success, she continued by saying that there are possibilities for partners to share their knowledge.



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## 4.2 EDUCATIONAL COOPERATION – THE EXPERIENCE OF THE BRIDGE PROGRAMME



### *Presentation 2:*

Educational Cooperation - The Experience of the Bridge Programme

### *Name of Presenter:*

Dr. Jihon Kim (Programme Specialist, Division of Bridge Programme, Korean National Commission)

The presentation on the subject at hand was given by Dr. Jihon Kim (Programme Specialist, Division of Bridge Programme), Korean National Commission for UNESCO. The presentation consisted of an overview, history, and achievements.

The Bridge Africa Program, according to Dr. Kim, attempted to increase the number of marginalised persons in Sub-Saharan Africa who had access to high-quality learning opportunities. As a result, the programme was expected to produce the following results: an improvement in the learning environment at Community Learning Centre (CLC), the operation of the CLC education programme, the development of CLC teachers' capacities, the distribution of learning materials, the development of CLC teachers' capacities, and the functioning of Bridge National Committee (BNC).

The Community Learning Centers initiative, which was centred on eight Sub-Saharan African nations, had UNESCO National Commissions as its primary partner. Its main goals were to enhance learning settings, disseminate instructional resources, and educate teachers.

She mentioned that the Bridge Africa Programme's trial term was from 2010 to 2012 while recounting its history. The International Educational Development Programme based on CLCs was to be adapted over the 2013–2015 period. Finally, the Africa Bridge Programme in Cooperation with National Commissions ran from 2016 to 2020.

According to Dr. Kim, the main successes were providing marginalised groups in Sub-Saharan Africa with high-quality education in Malawi, Lesotho, Zambia, Rwanda, Botswana, and Eswatini, which increased the opportunities for lifelong learning and promoted the sustainability of non-formal education. In general, there has been an improvement in non-formal education access and quality, as well as capacity building for the Korean National Commission for UNESCO and the African National Commissions.

She urged African and Korean NatComs to strengthen their collaborations (cooperative project implementation between and among NatComs with the assistance of pertinent governmental organisations, publication of joint reports, creation of synergy effects like senior level meetings, etc.) as she concluded her presentation. Additionally, she urged cooperation in order to guarantee the rights to education for the most disadvantaged groups that are not included in formal education.





## 5.0 THE ROLE OF NATIONAL COMMISSIONS FOR UNESCO



*Presenter:*

Mr. Alexandre Navarro (French National Commission)

### *Role and Missions of National Commissions for UNESCO-French National Commission*

Regarding UNESCO's medium-term strategy for 2022–2029 (41 C/4), Mr. Navarro explained that the Director General and the governing bodies have long yearned for an Organizational transformation that is strategic and all-encompassing, allowing it to better respond to the new challenges of the twenty-first century.

As such, in accordance with the authority granted to them by article VII of UNESCO's Constitution, Mr. Navarro indicated that the National Commissions for UNESCO, which act as liaisons between Member States, the Secretariat, the field units, and various partners of civil society, are required to play a crucial role in this context in order to support and ensure the success of this significant ongoing reform.

He went on to say that the 75th anniversary of UNESCO in 2020 served as the impetus for the inventory of the role and responsibilities expected of a National Commission because it is now more crucial than ever to better understand the added value that supports UNESCO's actions and to identify, where appropriate, potential improvements in this regard for the benefit of the entire network.

He discussed the workload of NATCOMs and the sharing of duties, sometimes with the Secretariat. He took the opportunity to increase interest in and visibility of the work of the National Commission among possible partners and actors in civil society, government agencies, and the general public.

Mr. Navarro identified the responsibilities of NATCOMs as liaison, coordination, consultation, representation, execution, and information based on the UNESCO charter, general conference resolutions, annual activity reports, practice guides, document on the architecture of national commissions, and other reference materials of the secretariat. The link to the full document is <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000374460>.



*... the 75th anniversary of UNESCO in 2020 served as the impetus for the inventory of the role and responsibilities expected of a National Commission because it is now more crucial than ever to better understand the added value that supports UNESCO's actions and to identify, where appropriate, potential improvements in this regard for the benefit of the entire network.*



*The Canadian National Commission promotes networks and designations through coordination, governance, serving as a conduit with UNESCO, establishing connections with other nations, government contacts, raising public knowledge and visibility, and publishing. In particular where there is no NGO, he noted, the Canadian NatComs organises advisory committees in the field of nomination or convening.*



## 5.1. PROMOTING AND SUPPORTING UNESCO DESIGNATIONS AND NETWORKS

*Presenter:*

Mr. David Schimpky (Canadian Commission for UNESCO)

A presentation by Mr. David Schimpky from the Canadian Commission for UNESCO was delivered on the theme promoting and supporting UNESCO designations and networks. He briefed delegates on the establishment and structure of the Canadian Commission for UNESCO. He added touched on strategic objectives and priorities which seek to make UNESCO's aims applicable to the Canadian context.

With Madame Roda Muse, Secretary General, at the helm of affairs, the Canadian Biosphere Reserves Network, UNESCO Chairs Network, Designations-Geoparks Networks, and UNESCO Creative Cities Network are the current UNESCO designations in Canada. Other networks or committees include the Memory of the World Committee, Coalition of Inclusive Municipalities, ASPnet (UNESCO Schools Network), UNEVOC Network, and Youth Advisory Group.

According to him, the National Commission has relationships and local knowledge that can assist in connecting designations with individuals within national governments or NGOs. Once more, with funding, NatComs may do their duty of advising their national governments, permanent delegations, and UNESCO.

The Canadian National Commission, according to him, promotes networks and designations through coordination, governance, serving as a conduit with UNESCO, establishing connections with other nations, government contacts, raising public knowledge and visibility, and publishing. In particular where there is no NGO, he noted, the Canadian NatComs organises advisory committees in the field of nomination or convening.

In addition to connecting with other nations, the NatComs serves as a link between UNESCO and networks. It focuses primarily on connections with foreign websites, international steering committees, research collaboration, supporting opportunities to participate in international panels, events, etc., and disseminating Canadian information to global networks. NatComs's responsibilities include ensuring effective public awareness and visibility as well as good government relations.

Mr. Schimpky suggested identifying opportunities to gather designations and networks to share information, finding out what they need, and helping them become more visible as three ways to support designations. He rounded up his presentation by reminding all NatComs that when working with designations and networks, it must be done with an understanding that partnership means everyone contributes something, according to their capacity. In addition, UNESCO and NatComs have much to learn from designations and networks and it is crucial that we encourage diversity plus building the defenses of peace in the minds of people.



## 6.0 VISIT TO UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE: ELIMINA AND CAPE COAST CASTLES

On Wednesday, 14th September 2022, conference participants embarked on a tour of the Elmina and Cape Coast castles - which are known UNESCO World Heritage sites in Ghana. The tour was organized in conjunction with the Ghana Tourism Development Company. The Ghana Museums and Monuments Board welcomed the delegates to the Castles and tour guides gave a tour of both Castles.



# 7.0 CONCLUSION AND WAY FORWARD

## CONCLUSION AND WAY FORWARD

At the end of the three-day conference, Member States adopted a declaration – the Accra Declaration - calling on Member States' contributions towards the implementation of the Global Priority Africa programme for the benefit of the Africa Continent.

Subsequently, Member States resolved to make it a biennial activity to be hosted voluntarily by the countries on Global Priority Africa.

## EVALUATION

**43% of the total 58 participants**, felt that **the meeting was well organised**, demonstrating that the level of organisation pleased the attendees. Additionally, 100% of respondents, or all respondents, concur that the correct persons were present at the meeting.

In order for the National Commission to be able to prioritise and take part in the Global Priority Africa flagships, **99.7%** of respondents once again **strongly agree that they feel empowered to increase awareness of the five flagships**. Consequently, the meeting's effect on the attendees is quite positive. All 25 responders acknowledged that they had learned about best practices and had equally shared perspectives about how to carry out the Global Priority Africa.

While **82% of respondents agreed**, 16.6% either disagreed or were ambivalent on whether **the conference bag had all necessary meeting materials**. This reaction suggests that more measures must be taken in upcoming events to guarantee that the bag's contents are pertinent to all respondents.

In terms of mobilising for partnerships, resources, and advocacy, **83.3%** of respondents said that overall, the meeting had given them the confidence they needed to become national champions for the Global Priority Africa flagships. This findings confirm that **the conference had a beneficial effect on the participants**.

**36%** of respondents thought the time was not effectively managed overall. In upcoming events, the Ghana NatCom will concentrate on efficient time management.

Since collaboration and communication are crucial, the Ghana NatCom is delighted to report that **100% of respondents thought participant engagement was handled effectively**.

The overwhelming majority of respondents (**91.0%+**) **agreed that the breakout sessions were successful**, that participant interaction was effectively managed, and that the speakers' presentations were in line with expectations. It is encouraging to notice that 100% of respondents said the Tang Palace hotel's accommodations, room service, food, and general customer service were adequate.

According to respondents, the Ghana Commission for UNESCO should continue to do the following in subsequent meetings:

- Ensure organisational dexterity and promptness in handling and resolving challenges as they arise;
- Continue to pay attention to detail;
- Build upon the effective coordination;
- Dynamism and cohesion;
- Teamwork and spirit; and continue to facilitate events for the realisation of UNESCO's ideals.





The Ghana Commission for UNESCO received the following recommendations regarding areas for improvement for future meetings: better time management, improved audio output in subsequent editions, and ensuring that all SGs attend meetings with at least one programme officer.

Last but not least, in response to the question of what the Ghana Commission for UNESCO should have done, respondents said that Ghana NATCOM should have included an exhibition of their earlier efforts in the spots for everyone to see and enjoy.

Since English was used more often, Ghana NatCom should once again make sure that the authorised languages are used. Really, the translation was subpar. However, time management needs to be improved, and Ghana NatCom could give attendees a day to see Accra at a subsequent gathering.

In conclusion, it can be established from the evaluation's conclusions that the meeting was effective.



Consequently, the meeting's effect on the attendees is quite positive.

All 25 responders acknowledged that they had learned about best practices and had equally shared perspectives about how to carry out the Global Priority Africa.



## Annexes:

### Goodwill message by H. E. Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, President of the Republic of Ghana.

*Statement by H.E. Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo,  
President of the Republic of Ghana*

Excellencies Ladies and Gentlemen,

I welcome you all to Accra, on this occasion of the Africa regional conference of National Commissions for UNESCO to discuss on subject of Global Priority Africa.

The hosting of this event in the beautiful city of Accra is yet another important milestone in Ghana's commitment to the work of UNESCO and in particular, Global Priority Africa Program, of which Ghana had the opportunity to make significant contribution to its initial orientations in the early 1980s.

Today, as you know, the dynamics of the Global Priority Africa Program has changed, both in its Continental aspirations and strategic focus. This is because our world continues to change with new and complex challenges and Global Priority Africa must strategically respond to the needs of the changing times. In this context, Ghana is happy to host this important conference of Africa Member States to reimagine our collective actions towards a renewed implementation agenda following the adoption of the new Operational Strategy at the 41st General Conference of UNESCO.

Our partnership with UNESCO in the Africa region dates as far back in 1962 when we hosted the first Africa Regional Centre for Educational Information and Research. Through this Centre we contributed immensely to the work of the Organization in the Africa Region through strategic interventions to promote education in the region. Ghana has also contributed to the work of UNESCO and its governing bodies: Ghana was the first African country south of the Sahara to be elected Chairman of the Executive Board and also the first African Country to have a lady representative on the Executive Board of UNESCO.

Ladies and gentlemen, as a multilateral Agency of the United Nations with the widest fields of competence, UNESCO is today expected to respond to the diverse challenges confronting the Continent. Ghana is convinced that this meeting presents a good opportunity to discuss how Africa National Commissions could deploy its unique competencies, expertise, and networks to tackle critical continental issues to be tabled at this conference.

I am informed that one of the issues to be discussed relates to media pluralism for development in Africa. We have always supported UNESCO's efforts at building free, independent, and pluralistic media and in particular, the legal framework and the democratic institutions that support it at the country level. We have observed with admiration UNESCO's contribution over the years in the operationalization of the UN Action Plan on the safety of journalists and the fight against impunity. The Government of Ghana strongly believes in development in freedom. Without freedom of expression and particularly, freedom of the press, an informed, active, and engaged citizenry cannot achieve our collective resolve for peace and sustainable development.

To conclude, ladies and gentlemen, I am happy to inform you that Accra, the Capital City of Ghana has been named the UNESCO World Book Capital for 2023, making this great city part of the prestigious World Book Capital Cities Network. This is an acknowledgement of the giant strides Ghana and Africa are making in developing our book and creative arts industry, and we thank you for your diverse contributions that made this possible. The year-long program to celebrate this honor done us by UNESCO, will commence from 23rd April 2023, which is celebrated globally as the World Book and Copyright Day. I wish to use this opportunity to invite you all to join Ghana in this year-long celebrations.

I wish you a successful conference.





## Statement by the Guest of Honor, Dr. Yaw Osei Adutwum, Minister for Education

*Madam Chairperson, Representative of The Director-General of UNESCO,  
Ministers of State, Distinguished Representatives of Africa National Commissions,  
Members of the Diplomatic Corp, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen.*

I am deeply inspired by the presence of Africa National Commissions for UNESCO in Accra to discuss critical issues related to the UNESCO Global Priority Africa Program.

As echoed in the video message of His Excellency Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, President of the Republic of Ghana, the hosting of this meeting in Accra is strategic as it serves unite National Commission in Africa to have a common agenda in furtherance of Global Priority Africa Program.

Ladies and gentlemen, education transformation and how Africa stands to progress on SDG4 target, including the opportunities offered by digital learning in recent years is a subject of immense importance to us all. I am happy that this meeting will discuss this subject in detail to ascertain the role of National Commissions for UNESCO to be mobilized for this worthy course.

I am further encouraged that this meeting will discuss issues related to biodiversity conservation, Artificial Intelligence, Media pluralism, Heritage management and the pedagogical use of the General History of Africa. Indeed, these areas importance to Africans both at home and the diaspora, and we look forward to the conclusions of this meeting and in particular the Declaration of Secretaries – General to converge our common priorities as well as outline a concrete forward-looking approach to re-imagine Global Priority Africa for the benefit of the Continent.

Allow me, Madam Chairperson, to highlight some few points in our collective efforts to protect the environment. As you know, Ghana has been at the forefront of multilateral action through the UNESCO Man and Biosphere program to sustainably utilize biodiversity and ecosystem services to improve livelihoods and protect the environment. Ghana was instrumental in the formation of the African Network of Biosphere Reserves (AfriMAB), which aims at promoting regional cooperation among MAB National Committees and Biosphere Reserves in Sub-Saharan Africa. I use this opportunity to congratulate UNESCO for using the Biosphere Reserve concept to chart a clear pathway in global climate change mitigation. We will continue to urge Member States to step up efforts to designate more biosphere reserves to avert the climate menace.

In the area of heritage management, Ghana joined the international community under the UNESCO World Heritage Convention as far as 1979, to protect and cherish the world's natural and cultural heritage by inscribing on the World Heritage list, the Forts, and Castles and Ashanti Traditional Buildings in her territory. This historic move was an important one since Ghana is home to over 80% of these ancient iconic monuments in Africa found along the Atlantic Coast of the country. The relics, some of which you will be visiting during this conference, were constructed by a mixture of Portuguese, English, German, Swedish, Danish and Dutch traders between 1480 and 1786. They served as fortified trading post representing significantly and emotively the continuing history of European-African encounter over four centuries and indeed, the starting point of the African diaspora. I will therefore urge UNESCO to deepen its work on the Routes of Enslaved People's Project with a view to offer lasting legacies and lessons for the peoples of the world.

The Government of Ghana with support from UNESCO has recently adopted a holistic and multi-sectoral approach to addressing key management and conservation challenges of our diverse heritages including the World Heritage properties hosted by the country. These strategic approaches have led to the formation of the Ghana Heritage Committee (WHC) which recently launched the first-ever Multi-Stakeholder Heritage Strategic Framework in the West Africa Sub-Region. We thank UNESCO and the WHC for the technical support in this endeavor and look forward to working with all Member States in the Africa region in this important area which is so dear to UNESCO.

I thank you for your attention and I wish you a successful conference.





# 8.0 PHOTO GALLERY









# Accra Declaration on Global Priority Africa Programme

We, the National Commissions for UNESCO in Africa having gathered in Accra, Ghana, from 11th – 14th September 2022, on the occasion of the Africa regional meeting of National Commissions convened with financial support from the Government of Ghana, UNESCO and National Commission partners from Germany, Canada, France and Azerbaijan ; to strengthen the relevance, effectiveness, and the overall strategic positioning of the Global Priority Africa Programme to address Africa's contemporary challenges; and to this end, we adopt the present Accra Declaration which converges our common strategic priorities and outlines a clear agenda for Africa National Commissions for UNESCO to contribute to implementing Global Priority Africa Programme for the benefit of the Continent.

## PREAMBLE:

1. Recalling General Conference decisions, 25 C/Resolution 27, 37 C/Resolution 1, 40 C/Resolution 61, 40 C/Resolution 102, 40 C / Resolution 103 and 41 C/Resolution on Global Priority Africa Programme, and in recent times, the conclusions and recommendation of sub-regional and regional meetings on same,
2. Recognizing the unique role and competencies of National Commissions in the overall constitutional architecture of UNESCO and the UN System as a whole, to provide strategic contacts and interfaces in Member States for the purposes of associating governmental and non-governmental bodies with the work of the Organization, in the areas of Education, Natural Sciences, Social and Human Sciences, Culture, Communication and Information,
3. Considering the critical role of National Commissions for UNESCO in contributing to the Global Priority Africa Programme including engineering partnerships and funding for the Programme to address the challenges of the Continent, noting, issues relating to progress on SDG4 targets; biodiversity conservation for peace and development; emerging technologies and Artificial Intelligence (AI); heritage management and a pluralistic media for a peaceful Continent,
4. Noting with concern the impact of contemporary, international, multidimensional crises linked to climate change, armed conflicts, natural disasters, pandemics (including the COVID 19 and its impact on the UNESCO domains in Africa); uncontrolled urbanization, the digital divide and widening knowledge and skills gaps, unsustainable development patterns, leading to increased poverty, setbacks, and exacerbated inequalities,
5. Express appreciation to UNESCO for the continuous prioritization of the needs of Africa, and, for the adoption of a new Operational Strategy for Global Priority Africa Programme, which is rooted in Agenda 2030 and the Africa Union's Vision 2063 for "an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, driven by its own citizens and representing a dynamic force in the global arena",
6. Stress the urgent need for national and international development community, including UNESCO to strengthen collaboration at the national, sub-regional and regional levels to implement Global Priority Africa Programme for an improved understanding of its relevance and potential to address the challenges of Africa,
7. Express appreciation to the Government of Ghana, UNESCO, and the community of National Commissions of UNESCO for the initiative to organize this important meeting on Global Priority Africa Programme,
8. Invite National Commissions of UNESCO in Africa to reactivate its regular biennial meetings to be hosted voluntarily by Member States in the five electoral regions on a rotational basis,
9. Further invite National Commissions for UNESCO in African Member States to strengthen collaboration with Development Partners (DPs), International Non-Governmental Organizations (INGOs), foundations, and similar institutions towards increased partnerships and engagement for Global Priority Africa Programme,
10. Stress the need for the Secretariat of UNESCO to recognize National Commissions' statutory role as enshrined in the Constitution of UNESCO, the Architecture of National Commission, and related UNESCO documents, to foster a more effective collaboration between National Commissions and UNESCO Field Offices.





# Planning Committee

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## **List of members of Steering Committee for the 2022 African Regional Meeting:**

01. Ama Serwah Nerquaye- Tetteh (Mrs.)
02. Mr. Apollonius Osei- Akoto Asare
03. Mr. Riche-Mike Wellington
04. Ms. Marian Nortey
05. Mr. Gilbert Dadzie
06. Mr. Carlton Mukwevho
07. Mr. M. Aliou LY
08. Mr. Roderick April
09. Ms. Chetty Lefika
10. Mr. Rosie Agoi
11. Mr. Santiago Bivini Mangué

## **List of members of Planning Committee for the 2022 African Regional Meeting:**

01. Ama Serwah Nerquaye- Tetteh (Mrs.)
02. Mr. Apollonius Osei- Akoto Asare
03. Mr. Riche-Mike Wellington
04. Mr. Kofi Takyi Kwakye
05. Mr. Moses J. Y. Gemeh
06. Miss Marian Nortey
07. Ms. Joan Nsowah Agyekum
08. Mr. Christopher Wetcher
09. Mr. Frank Gilbert Hotor
10. Ms.. Abigail Gyawu
11. Ms. Anita Noah
12. Mr. Joseph Gbekley
13. Ms. Anastasia Egyin
14. Ms. Doris Nyator
15. Ms. Aba Botchway



# REGIONAL MEETING OF AFRICA NATIONAL COMMISSIONS FOR UNESCO



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