

MOST/IGC/2015/REP/REV

June 2015

Original: English

**SUMMARY REPORT ON THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE
TWELFTH SESSION OF
THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL COUNCIL (IGC)
OF THE MANAGEMENT OF SOCIAL
TRANSFORMATIONS PROGRAMME (MOST)**

**UNESCO Headquarters, Paris
1-2 June 2015**

1. Introductory items (agenda items 1 and 2)¹

The session began with remarks from the President of the IGC, Her Excellency, Ms Alicia Kirchner, Minister of Social Development of the Government of the Republic of Argentina.

The President highlighted the relevance of MOST as a meeting point valued by social scientists and policymakers for its contribution to deliberation on social inclusion as one crucial aspect of development. It was recalled that, through a series of forums, seminars, MOST schools, and other initiatives, the MOST Programme has fostered perception of social inclusion as a main axis of development under diverse national contexts.

In that sense, she argued that MOST Ministerial Forums have progressively developed as an instance for coordination and collective learning which facilitates the adaptation of social science knowledge to national and regional realities of public policymaking, while MOST Schools, of which 8 sessions have been organized with the participation of youth from 20 countries, have proved to be open and pluralistic spaces to dialogue on research and public policy with young stakeholders, which constitute a key target group for the MOST Programme.

The President invited participants to consider a set of challenges that MOST needs urgently to address, in particular decisions concerning the establishment of MOST National Liaison Committees (MNLCS) where they do not exist, as well as improving communication between existing Committees. Solutions to that challenge also require a more vigorous utilization of communication strategies and optimization of ICTs in MOST, notably upgrading MOST websites.

The President concluded by stating her aspiration that this 12th IGC session contribute to advancement of the overarching goal of MOST, which is to function as a strategic and visible connection between research and policy-making which could inspire Member States in the design and implementation of public policies for social inclusion.

Introductory remarks were also made by the UNESCO Assistant Director-General for Social and Human Sciences (ADG/SHS), Ms Nada Al-Nashif, who stated that it was a pleasure and an honour for her to participate, for the first time, in a session of the Intergovernmental Council of the MOST Programme. On behalf of the Director-General, she thanked IGC Member States for their commitment to MOST, and expressed her gratitude in particular to the President for her sustained and dynamic leadership.

ADG/SHS stated that MOST was important, had major assets, but also faced major challenges. She suggested that it was necessary to build on those assets to turn the challenges into opportunities that can be grasped, and emphasized her conviction that the session would proceed in that spirit. To underline these points, ADG/SHS referred to the words of the Director-General when she addressed the joint meeting of the IGC Bureau and Scientific Advisory Committee in June 2014.

¹ The draft agenda and timetable of the meeting, as adopted in its first session, is attached hereto as appendix 1. The list of participants is attached hereto as appendix 2.

The Director-General had emphasized that the present moment is important for MOST, as states are shaping a new global sustainable development agenda to follow the Millennium Development Goals, while undergoing profound social transformations – including demographic pressure, accelerated urbanization, rising inequalities and increasing calls for social justice and social inclusion, for the eradication of poverty, for greater citizen participation in consolidating democracy. Each of these transformations is unique, and each country has its own experience.

Echoing the words of the Director-General, ADG/SHS stressed that MOST needs to work at the crossroads of these transformations, which call both for enhanced knowledge and stronger action. For solutions cannot be only technical, and sustainability cannot be addressed solely from an economic angle. It is necessary to begin with social equity and justice, with dialogue for respect and mutual understanding, with public policies that take individual rights and dignity as their cue. This is why the social sciences are so essential – to craft more effective and inclusive dialogue and policy, drawing on evidence, reflecting the highly diverse reality of situations.

The question, ADG/SHS noted, was how to give substance to the vision. Without anticipating on the strategic discussion under item 6 of the agenda, she underlined that the stakes are high, at a time when UNESCO's regular budget is under severe pressure and external funding, while considerable in principle, is in practice highly competitive and often difficult to mobilize for the social and human sciences. A new and enhanced dynamic for MOST is thus not an option: it is a necessity.

While the Secretariat obviously has an important role to play, ADG/SHS emphasized that MOST belongs, above all, to its Member States, who have the capacity to turn the challenges MOST faces into opportunities, enabling the programme to occupy within the UN system the place that its ambitious and increasingly relevant mandate deserves. She commended the Bureau, led by the President, with Vice-Presidents who have shown their commitment through activities, including Ministerial Forums, that would be reported on under agenda item 4. She also referred to the role of the Scientific Advisory Committee, under the eminent leadership of Dr Emir Sader, which can play a key role in strengthening the scientific credibility and impact of MOST.

In concluding, ADG/SHS noted that, while in some areas change may be required, and in others continuity may be the best option, MOST certainly cannot rest on its laurels. She indicated that she looked forward to listening to Member States' views on how to advance and to working with them to put MOST where it should be.

2. Election of Rapporteur (agenda item 3)

The candidacy for the position of Rapporteur of Mr Normand Labrie, delegate of Canada to the IGC, was presented by Turkey in its capacity as Chair of UNESCO Electoral Group I. After a brief suspension of business for consultations within the Bureau, Mr Labrie was unanimously elected as IGC Rapporteur.

3. Initiatives by IGC Bureau Members (agenda item 4)

Mr Jan Monteverde Haakonsen, Special Advisor, Norwegian Research Council, and Member of the Norwegian National Commission, representing Norway as Vice-President for Group I, listed major activities undertaken since the Eleventh Session of the IGC in March 2013, which focused especially on the social transformations arising from global environmental change. Specifically, he launched an initiative to identify all MOST committees and/or contact points in Europe and North America; chaired a MOST side-event on digital technologies and social transformations at the WSSF in Montreal (October 2013); participated and made a presentation at the 3rd ECOWAS Forum of Ministers for Social Development (Accra, December 2013); co-hosted a launch event for the 2013 WSSR in Norway (May 2014); convened a thematic session on population issues at the 1st Forum of Ministers of Social Development for Eastern Africa (Nairobi, February 2015), and maintained close contact with ISSC on issues relevant to MOST.

Mr Haakonsen went on to draw attention to the lessons learned from these activities. He argued that there is still insufficient awareness about the MOST Programme in Europe and North America and that MOST networks are virtually non-existent: there are few national MOST committees and the list of contact persons provided by the secretariat is outdated. He noted that while policymakers seem to have close contacts with social scientists, use of their research results has been selective. Mr Haakonsen stressed however that there is a more positive attitude towards the role of social sciences in Europe and North America than in some other regions.

He concluded his presentation by outlining what he regarded as priorities for the coming period:

- Establish a regional MOST network in Europe and North America;
- Underline UNESCO's unique role as the only UN organization with science as a mandate, including social science;
- Make MOST known both to research communities and to policy-makers;
- Make the resolutions of the 37th session of the UNESCO General Conference that are relevant to MOST strategic development known to social science communities and national authorities;
- Focus on the post-2015 development agenda and follow up recommendations from the UNESCO/ISSC Expert Group Meeting on global justice (April 2014);
- Encourage social science communities in the region to work towards common positions and priorities for the 2015 World Social Science Forum in Durban in 2015;
- Mobilize support and interest for the 2016 World Social Science Report;
- Continue and further develop the close ties and relations with ISSC.

Mr Ľubomir Faltan, Senior Researcher at the Institute for Sociology of the Slovak Academy of Science, representing Slovakia as Vice-President for Group II, informed meeting participants that migration constitutes a major priority for MOST in South-East Europe. One of the main activities implemented

in this area was a sub-regional conference organized by the Slovak National Commission for UNESCO in November 2014 in Bratislava, in cooperation with the Polish, Czech and Slovenian National Commissions for UNESCO, which addressed cross-border migration and its impact on social transformations in South-East Europe. Mr Faltan welcomed the participation of Mr Haakonsen in the conference, as a good example of cross-regional cooperation, and expressed his agreement with the general comments made on behalf of Group I.

Mr Galo Mora Witt, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Permanent Delegate of Ecuador to UNESCO, representing Ms Betty Tola, Minister of Economic and Social Inclusion, Ecuador, explained that Minister Tola, Vice-President of IGC for Latin America and the Caribbean, was not able to attend the meeting due to other important governmental commitments, notably the celebration of the Day of Children in Ecuador. In his presentation, Ambassador Mora summarized the main outcomes of the work carried out by MOST in the LAC region, among which he remarked the Xth Forum of Ministers of Social Development of Latin America, held in Quito, Ecuador (October 2014), in particular decisions concerning the establishment of a technical secretariat which have laid the basis for a portfolio of opportunities for collaboration. He also highlighted the participation of key research institutions and the main regional social science networks in supporting priority areas of research relevant to public policies. Ambassador Mora reaffirmed that the government of Ecuador is working to ensure the follow-up of the Forum in order to create appropriate conditions for the preparation of the next regional Ministerial Forum, to be organized in Nicaragua. The representative of the Vice-President of Group III emphasized the advances made in favour of social inclusion and social justice in several countries of the region and the commitment of his government to support the MOST Programme.

Dr Noorul Ainur Mohd Nur, Secretary-General of the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation, representing Malaysia as Vice-President from Group IV, first presented an overview of the ASPAC region, which comprises 44 countries, covering developed countries, upper- and middle-income countries and LDCs. She stressed that they have different needs and requirements to which MOST must be sensitive. Despite this diversity, however, a shared issue that will be of great importance for ASPAC in the years after 2015 is inequalities.

Dr Noorul also emphasized the gaps between social sciences and policy development and the need to enhance the capacity of researchers to produce evidence-based knowledge.

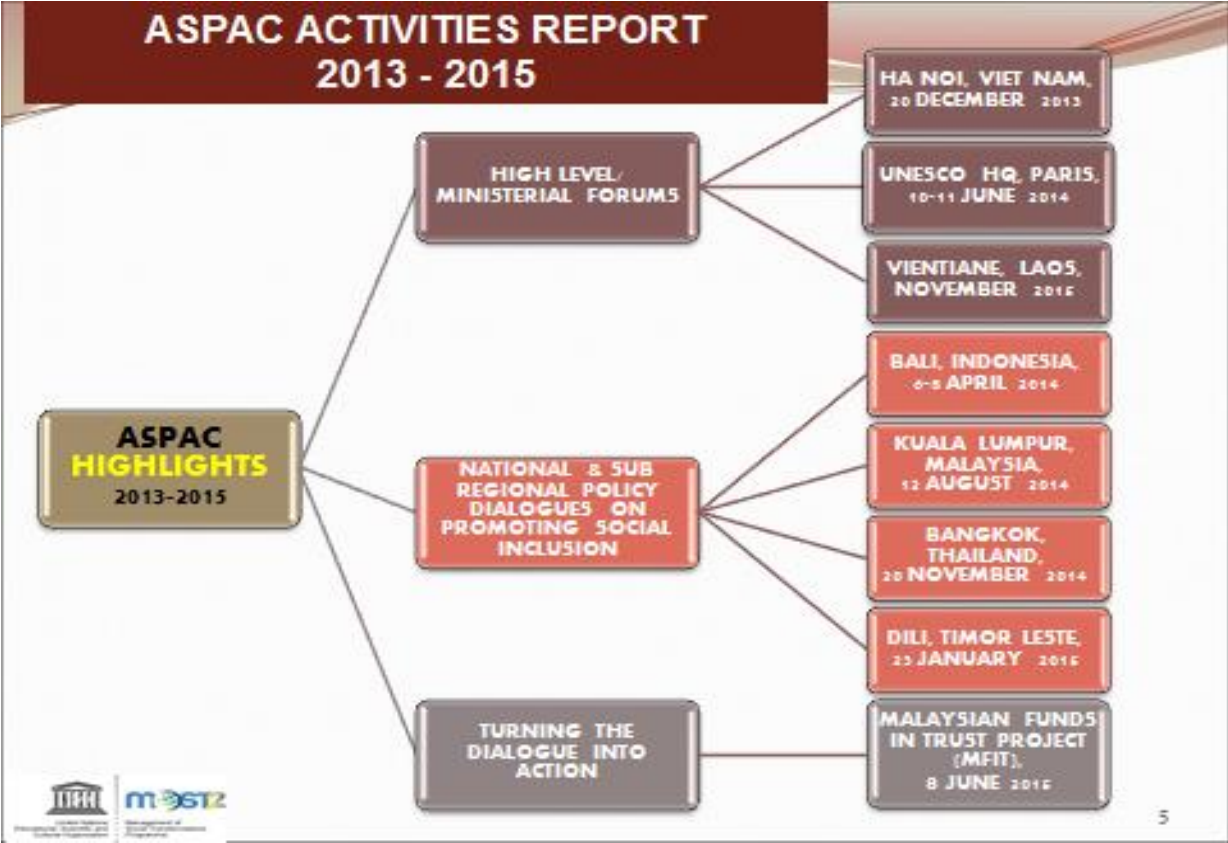
In light of these observations, Dr Noorul outlined the goals and objectives she regards as particularly relevant to the work of MOST in the ASPAC region:

- To increase regional reach of MOST in ASPAC, including meeting with ASPAC delegations to UNESCO in order to raise awareness on MOST and to solicit support;
- To foster South-South and North-South collaboration with a view to exchanging good practices and developing joint initiatives;
- To improve reporting mechanisms, information sharing and follow-up to MOST activities.

She informed the IGC that, in advance of the June 2014 meeting of the Bureau and SAC, she had organized a pre-meeting with ASPAC representatives in Malaysia, on 27 May 2014, in order to canvass views in advance of the present meeting. Specifically, the purpose of the pre-meeting was to

initiate steps towards establishing mechanisms to follow-up on MOST activities and initiatives; establishing research networks through sharing of best practices; increasing involvement of national social science communities, moving from university-based research to policy advice and support; focusing on youth as a MOST priority; and compiling country reports on activities, research, studies and programmes to be reported through formal MOST channels.

Dr Noorul summarized the various MOST meetings organized or planned in the ASPAC region since the Eleventh Ordinary Session of the IGC, which are presented by category in the slide below.



Dr Noorul noted that the proposed ASEAN Ministerial Forum in 2015 would focus on “Mobilizing Social Innovation for Sustainable Development in the ASEAN Region”, and would be held back-to-back with a meeting of ASEAN Ministers of Science, Technology in November 2015, thereby facilitating buy-on from a stakeholder group not hitherto strongly engaged with MOST. The objectives of the Forum are to foster social innovation for sustainable development; to develop new tools to support local initiatives towards sustainable development; and to encourage potential collaboration between ASEAN members and UNESCO on social innovation.

She further drew attention to the initiative of Malaysia in support of MOST through the Malaysian Funds-in-Trust (M-FIT) programme at UNESCO. An M-FIT project has been approved on “Promoting Social Inclusion through Public Policies”, the main objective of which is to strengthen ASEAN Community 2015 through South-South cooperation, research, foresight and capacity-building on inclusive policy development in Malaysia, Timor Leste and Cambodia. The project, which starts in June 2015, is designed to help governments ensure that public policies benefit everyone; to ensure that public policies include the disadvantaged and vulnerable group; and to contribute to equitable and sustainable development.

Ambassador Mary Khimulu, representing Kenya as Vice-President from Group V, first shared her view that benefits for the MOST Programme can come along with responsibility, and she continued by highlighting the importance of the active engagement of communities around the world in the programme. To achieve this objective, she suggested that the existing structures of the MOST Programme – namely the MOST Regional Offices, the MOST National Commissions, the MOST Ministerial Forums and SAC – should be mobilized.

More specifically, she pointed out that both MOST regional offices and MOST National Commissions can provide the programme with invaluable input by working with people and communities at the grassroots level, while the MOST Ministerial Forums can be used to reach decision makers and establish meaningful dialogue between leadership and communities around the world. She further suggested that members of the MOST Scientific Advisory Committee can also contribute to the visibility of MOST in their regions.

Ms Khimulu continued by underlining that the member states should work closely with the secretariat and the members of SAC to gain a better understanding of the programme and its added value to their regions, in order to be in a position to communicate the programme's merits effectively to their National Commissions and accordingly to their leadership. She noted that MOST UNESCO Chairs should also be mobilized and research on themes relevant to the MOST should be encouraged. In this regard, she made a reference to the Institute of Development Studies that the Kenyan National Commission Chair for MOST is running.

Furthermore, she focused on the need for youth empowerment with respect to youth unemployment, which can undermine societal peace and trigger conflict, and she also addressed the issue of climate change, highlighting its link to the depletion of resources and migration and the serious threat it poses to peace.

Ms Khimulu concluded that MOST must continue establishing meaningful partnerships and urged the members of the Council to take the opportunity of the forthcoming UNESCO General Conference to make the MOST agenda visible.

Mr Jassim Mohd Al-Ali, Chief of Section for Conflict Resolution, Sector for International Organizations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, representing the United Arab Emirates, as Vice-President of group Vb, described the four points of a strategy developed by three Ministries in Abu Dhabi regarding the implementation of MOST for improved visibility of the Programme in the Arab region.

Mr Al-Ali stressed the necessity for the MOST Programme to work closer to the people and the challenges they face on the ground. He explained that the strategy presented is not meant to be academic. Rather, it aims at mobilizing both researchers and national commissions in the Arab region, with a view to building a network of ideas, expertise and projects. In this regard, Mr Al-Ali announced the interest of the UAE in hosting a MOST school that could welcome around 80 young people from 22 different countries.

The second aspect of the strategy consists in the establishment of a core of researchers in sociology, based in Abu Dhabi at the Emirati Center for Research and Strategic Studies. The Center was created several years ago and has proven very effective. It will gather researchers and academics mostly from

Beirut and Cairo; the network will then be expanded to other Arab countries such as Morocco, Tunisia and Jordan.

Mr Al-Ali raised a particular concern about the supervision and management of displaced populations in the Arab region. He recalled that several Arab countries have shown great generosity in this regard; Kuwait has hosted two major international conferences dedicated to this issue and there has been some progress recorded in terms of school enrolment. However, many countries such as Lebanon (which is host to 1.5 million Syrian refugees) are still undergoing great difficulties in offering education to all displaced people, while managing at the same time the challenges of their social integration.

Finally, Mr Al-Ali presented the fourth aspect of the strategy as the most important: a culture of peace. He expressed the idea that youth in the Middle East is in great need of a culture of peace as the current climate of collapse of certain state structures undermines the culture of living together. He also stressed the fact that the UAE, drawing from their experience in hosting 200 foreign nationalities in harmony with local populations, will be able to actively promote the values of peace.

4. Strategic Priorities for MOST in the Context of the Post-2015 Agenda (agenda item 6)

The round table discussion was introduced by ADG/SHS, who reiterated the overriding concern to turn the challenges MOST faces into opportunities, enabling the programme to occupy within the UN system the place that its ambitious and increasingly relevant mandate deserves. With that in mind, she presented certain key points from the Secretariat discussion document “Overview of strategic issues for the MOST Programme” (session document MOST/IGC/2015/6.2).

ADG/SHS drew attention, in the Secretariat discussion document, to the emphasis on ownership – a principle that dates back to the establishment of MOST by the General Conference in 1993 but is still very incompletely realized. Alongside undoubted successes, such as Ministerial Forums and Schools, she argued that there is insufficient engagement on the part of key stakeholders. Ultimately, the success of MOST can be measured very simply by just two criteria: political support and scientific visibility. ADG/SHS therefore invited Member States to focus their discussion on what MOST should be aiming at, by the end of the current Medium-Term Strategy in 2021, and what needs to be done, in very practical terms, to get there.

ADG/SHS committed the Secretariat to rise to the challenge of making MOST a forum where leading global players come together to discuss conceptual, methodological and empirical issues relating to social transformations, working closely with sister agencies, funds and programmes in the UN system, as well as with other international bodies and regional social science councils. In particular, she argued that perceptions cannot be durably shifted unless there are strong, distinctive branded outputs that people want to use, to cite and to adapt for their own purposes. Publications, indicators, online platforms, training programmes – ADG/SHS emphasized that it is for the IGC to determine what it thinks the MOST logo should be on and what it can support, so that the Secretariat can find ways of doing it at the required level of quality and impact.

She invited Member States to consider the various options and issues proposed in the Secretariat discussion paper. Some extend existing workstreams, such as Ministerial Forums and Schools, on which a specific discussion is scheduled. These are successful brands that enjoy recognition and support, but which need to deliver more. In other areas, she argued, new initiatives may be required, whether to embed MOST more strongly in the UN system or to establish the capacity to respond operationally to Member States' needs at national level.

However, ADG/SHS stressed that it is not a wish list that MOST needs. On the contrary, what are needed are clear priorities within the terms of the frameworks already established by the General Conference, each matched to the demonstrable capacity to fund it. While UNESCO's regular budget can support only core human capacity in the Secretariat, statutory mechanisms, and a handful of carefully targeted programme activities, everything else requires active and ambitious resource mobilization.

ADG/SHS emphasized that her reference to resource mobilization did not necessarily imply extrabudgetary support to UNESCO itself. The bulk of the resources required by MOST should actually be flowing through the channels of national policy, to support research, policy transfer and capacity-building, branded as MOST, in the myriad areas relating to social transformations.

The introduction by ADG/SHS was followed by statements by each Vice-President, who highlighted recent accomplishments, but also insisted on the importance and relevance of MOST in their respective regions, on some weaknesses of the Programme, and on the need to define a clear focus for the future.

The Chair of SAC also intervened on this item. He stated that this was a very important meeting of MOST because it was emphasizing the central axis which originally inspired the Programme towards: the analysis and mobilization of the social sciences in relation to social transformations, the majority of which have, in his view, been negative. The economic and social condition of many people has worsened in the last decades and there have been setbacks in human rights, including in developed countries, as in the case of Europe where welfare states are being dismantled. The President of SAC stated that while MOST will not solve those problems, the Programme can be very useful in understanding the situation and to share possible solutions. In that sense, mention was made to the role of MOST Ministerial Forums and MOST Schools. The President of SAC underlined that it is important, especially for youth to understand why this situation exists and what could be done to overcome it. In that sense, the President of SAC concluded by saying that what MOST does is participating in a "battle of ideas" because to a large extent, the current state of world affairs can be explained because negative and reactionary thinking prevails in many places. The task of MOST is not just to support policies in general but to provide ideas that can orient policies towards positive social transformations.

Bureau members gave brief comments on their understanding of the role of MOST with respect to the post-2015 development agenda, followed by general discussion within IGC, from which consensus emerged on the need for sustained linkages between policy decision-making and research, through recourse to evidence-based decision-making at all levels: international, national, regional, and local.

Thematically, inclusion was reaffirmed as a major objective of MOST, closely associated with the reduction of inequalities, and youth was stated to be a very important targeted population. Among other topics generally felt to be of thematic relevance to MOST, all of which fall under the overall objective of sustainable development, were the social transformations related to conflicts and climate change, increasing inequalities, discrimination, inclusion of vulnerable groups, gender equality, human rights, and the transformative nature of social media. It was recognized that, while national initiatives could be highly diverse, MOST itself should concentrate on a limited number of issues, possibly differentiated according to regional concerns. In this respect, participants in the discussion felt that cross-border migration – considered from the perspectives of sending and transit countries as well as receiving countries, and with an equally strong focus on the perspectives of migrants themselves – could constitute a shared priority concern.

A generally shared perception was also apparent of certain key shortcomings of MOST, among which particular emphasis was put on the virtual non-existence of MOST networks in some regions and the lack of coordination between countries and regions, despite the existence of numerous national initiatives.

In light of these observations, a number of actions were identified as having the potential to improve the performance, standing and impact of MOST by rethinking programme operationalization in terms both of objectives and of practical modalities.

First, in structural and statutory terms, the desirability was noted of reviewing and possibly revising the Statutes and Rules of Procedure, including those of SAC. A specific decision on this point was adopted in due course (see section 8 below). The structural need for strengthening of national committees or equivalent mechanisms at national level was also noted.

Secondly, concern was expressed about the insufficient visibility of MOST, which was linked in turn to weaknesses in its website and other communication and outreach tools. Some participants suggested that developing a catalogue of best practices and success stories to be shared on the revamped website could be a practically valuable way of ensuring both buy-in and visibility. The Secretariat indicated in the course of the discussion that steps were already under way to review and redesign the MOST website, including possible development of new communication tools.

Thirdly, participants in the discussion argued that MOST would benefit from stronger engagement of a broader range of stakeholders, implying efforts to facilitate participation in activities and debates of civil society, NGOs, social services and grassroots movements.

5. Strategic Overview and Guidelines for the MOST Schools (agenda items 4 and 7)

The item was introduced by the Chair of SAC, reporting in particular on the SAC meeting that took place on 2 June, on the margins of the IGC session. He expressed his support for the principle of MOST schools, but also made some critical comments about the proposed guidelines as circulated to the IGC (session document MOST/IGC/2015/7).

Specifically, the Chair of SAC stated that the guidelines had two main defects: the lack of a comprehensive evaluation of the experience of the schools organized thus far, and the suggestion of an approach which is not flexible in terms of the criteria for the selection of participants. In his opinion, the proposed guidelines seemed excessively centred on the circumstances of Latin America and the Caribbean, in contrast with the flexibility required during the organization of the MOST Schools in Marrakech and Tunis, taking into consideration the specificities of the host societies and the characteristics of the local partners. He emphasized that, notwithstanding contextual diversity, it was important to design a proposal that would enable the label of MOST Schools to be applied to various modalities appropriate in distinct contexts.

The Chair of SAC also offered some reflections on the thematic orientations of MOST Schools. He mentioned that the three themes selected for the schools held in Morocco and Tunisia had been public policies, human rights and gender issues. He stressed the potential role of MOST Schools in explaining to young people that social inclusion refers to a significant transformation of societies where social exclusion is currently rampant and where there are ideas which try to legitimize that situation or to minimize positive change, citing the recent case of the difficulties faced by Greece. The Chair of SAC concluded by challenging the idea that education constitutes salvation for contemporary societies, at least if the point is made in purely abstract terms. What is important, he argued, is education aimed at emancipation rather than as training for functioning in the labour market.

The Executive Secretary then presented the draft guidelines proposed by the Secretariat for the consideration of the IGC (session document MOST/IGC/2015/7).

There was lively discussion on many aspects of the draft guidelines. Broad consensus was in evidence on the potential value of MOST Schools as a mechanism to foster engagement at national level, to involve social science communities in MOST, to build capacities and to favour the circulation of knowledge. Furthermore, it was generally agreed that the development of explicit guidelines for the various substantive and procedural aspects of MOST Schools would be of great value in expanding their reach and impact. On the other hand, it was emphasized, consistently with the remarks of the Chair of SAC, that any guidelines should leave space for considerable diversity of contexts and circumstances, which would inevitably affect the format, content and institutional setting of MOST Schools.

However, most Member States also considered that the potential benefits of MOST Schools could be captured only through a new approach. The value of a formal evaluation of past experience was stressed by many participants in the discussion, consistently with the view expressed by the Chair of SAC. Other SAC members also stressed that expansion of MOST Schools should not be undertaken without clarification of what they are intended to achieve and establishment of mechanisms to assess the effectiveness and impact against explicit targets and benchmarks.

The proposal that MOST Schools be made effective and given greater reach by focusing on training trainers – rather than just individual young or mid-career academics – was generally supported. One implication, consistent with the emphasis on evaluation frameworks, is that the way in which trainers actually use the training they have received deserves monitoring, which in turn entails a much more systematic approach to networking MOST School alumni.

6. MOST Cooperation with Existing and New Partners (agenda item 8)

Noting the strategic need for MOST to work closely with UN and academic stakeholders to achieve its objectives, the IGC was given the opportunity to interact with selected partners as a complement to the general strategic reflections scheduled under agenda items 6 and 7. Presentations were made by representatives of the International Social Science Council (ISSC), the United Nations Department for Social and Economic Affairs (UNDESA), the ²United Nations Research Institute on Social Development (UNRISD) and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

ISSC presented its main activities and emphasized the constructive engagement of MOST with them, as well as the valuable opportunities offered to ISSC to contribute to MOST events, including Ministerial Forums as well as UN side events. Particular emphasis was put on the World Social Science Forum (Durban, South Africa, 13-16 September 2015), which will in particular include a MOST interregional ministerial panel; on the 2016 World Social Science Report, which MOST was invited to regard as a major contribution to its agenda on social inequalities in global context, and which IGC Member States were invited to consider supporting; and on the research programme on Transformations to Sustainability, substantive results of which will start to be available in 2015, and which represents tangible and concrete follow-up to the World Social Science Report published on *Changing Global Environments* in 2013.

UNDESA offered an overview of the post-2015 process and of its emerging substantive outcomes, in the form of the Sustainable Development Goals and their related targets. The importance was emphasized of knowledge from the social and human sciences in establishing credible and practically applicable frameworks for monitoring, including but not limited to quantitative indicators. MOST was invited to contribute to the ongoing process as appropriate within its mandate.

UNRISD offered a complementary and more critical perspective on the post-2015 development agenda, which has the potential to be profoundly transformative, but at the same time could itself be transformed by the structural conditions within which it will be applied. In a similar spirit to MOST, but with its own distinctive angle, it was explained that UNRISD will be focusing on policy coherence, compatibility and translation, as well as on tracing the processes that connect the conditions of policy development, policy content and policy impact, in line with the emphasis on governance, participation and accountability in the Sustainable Development Goals themselves. It was further noted that UNRISD constitutes the leading task force within the UN system on the social and solidarity economy, which is an important emerging area for more human-oriented development perspectives.

OECD noted that its development cooperation work, in particular through its Development Centre, proceeded in a similar spirit to MOST and offered significant potential for cooperation. It was argued that knowledge constitutes a key challenge for the post-2015 development framework, and that countries will be seeking knowledge wherever it might be available. Questions about the credibility, relevance and applicability of knowledge, as well as about its ownership – all of major significance for MOST – will thus be of central importance. Thematically, the OECD representative noted that the OECD emphasis on structural transformations is distinct from but in many ways connected to the

² UNDESA, UNRISD and OECD participated in a round table discussion on 2 June. Due to agenda constraints, ISSC addressed the IGC separately on 1 June.

MOST theme of social transformations. The observation that growth is not producing jobs or well-being – which is the basis for the OECD agenda on “Better policies for better lives” – offers one bridge between the economic and social aspects of sustainable development, which could be explored through institutional cooperation. It was suggested that MOST and OECD have complementary assets in this regard – the OECD bringing tools such as Social Institutions and Gender Index, while MOST has valuable assets in systems thinking and foresight. For example, as discussed elsewhere during the IGC session (see section 4 above), migration will be an important policy and research theme for the future – and it lends itself well to application of anticipatory techniques.

The IGC welcomed the input from UN and other partners and encouraged the Secretariat to engage in further discussion in order to identify practical modalities of cooperation for the benefit of MOST as a whole.

7. Interim Report on the Audit of the Governance of UNESCO and Dependent Funds, Programmes and Entities (agenda item 9)

The item was introduced by the Executive Secretary, who explained that its purpose was to enable the IGC to take note of the steps taken or to be taken by the External Auditor in response to the resolution adopted by the General Conference at its 37th session in November 2015 (37 C/Res. 59) to conduct an audit of the “external governance” of UNESCO.

The documents having been distributed, and being largely self-explanatory, the Executive Secretary’s brief introduction served to provide some additional background information on the process and the subsequent steps envisaged. He explained that no IGC decision was required on this item and that it would be for the President to determine whether any discussion was appropriate.

The General Conference requested the External Auditor to review the status and operations of over 50 intergovernmental bodies – including MOST IGC – that engage member states directly in the governance of UNESCO or of aspects of its programmes. In order to do this, the External Auditor elaborated two questionnaires. The first, designed to collect the views of member states themselves, was administered under the responsibility of the respective governing bodies, with no substantive intervention by the secretariat. The second, designed to collate factual information on statutory and financial matters, was to be completed under the authority of the respective governing bodies with such technical support from the secretariat as might be required.

The Executive Secretary explained that, in the case of MOST, the questionnaires were completed according to a procedure adopted by the IGC Bureau at its meeting in June 2014. The substantive questionnaire was submitted to the External Auditor by the IGC President after consultation with the Bureau, and the factual questionnaire was, at the request of the President, submitted directly by the secretariat.

The External Auditor presented to the Executive Board at its 196th session in April 2015, in an “Interim report on the audit of the governance of UNESCO and dependent funds, programmes and entities” (documents 196 EX/23 part V and 196 EX/23.INF.5), a preliminary analysis of the responses received, along with provisional observations taking account of the responses as well as of other

sources of information, including a UN system benchmarking exercise. No recommendations or conclusions were formulated by the External Auditor in the aforementioned report, which the Executive Board took note of in its decision.

The Executive Secretary indicated that the External Auditor's final report would be considered by the General Conference at its 38th session in November 2015.

In light of the External Auditor's interim report, and recognizing that conclusions and recommendations had not yet been formulated, the IGC discussed in detail whether specific follow-up action might be envisaged at this stage. The view was expressed by a number of Member States that revision of the Statutes and Rules of Procedure, to clarify them and bring them up to date, could be launched immediately, since it would be both valuable in its own right and relevant with respect to any recommendations likely to be put forward in due course by the External Auditor. On the other hand, some Member States considered that possible revision of the Statutes and Rules and Procedure should be envisaged only once consensus had been reached on strategic directions for MOST, the purpose of the statutory framework being precisely to facilitate the implementation of the strategy.

It was noted that any revision of the Statutes would need to be adopted in due course by the General Conference, at the earliest at its 38th session in 2017. This would require extensive prior consultation, engaging both the IGC itself and the UNESCO Executive Board.

8. Other Administrative Matters (agenda item 9)

It was pointed out that, in June 2014, the Bureau had given the Secretariat the formal approval for the revised and updated version of the MOST consultation on the role of the social and human sciences in integrated science for sustainable development and requested the secretariat to proceed with the consultation at the earliest opportunity. While this consultation has yet to be carried out, ADG/SHS assured the IGC that it would be carried out before the upcoming General Conference and the results presented at the extraordinary session of the IGC in that connection.

9. Adoption of Summary Report and Decisions (agenda item 10)

The IGC was invited to consider and adopt draft decisions which had been discussed in detail by the Bureau during a specially convened meeting on 2 June. After detailed discussion and some minor technical revisions, the IGC adopted by consensus the decisions appended hereto as appendix 3.

Finally, the Rapporteur presented a summary oral report on the proceedings of the session, which was noted by the IGC.

10. Closing Statements (agenda item 11)

The President and ADG/SGS addressed brief closing statements to the IGC, welcoming the constructive discussions and concrete outcomes of the session and committing to rapid and effective follow-up on the part of both the Member States and the Secretariat in order to ensure significant advances by the time of the Extraordinary Session of the IGC scheduled in November 2015.

Appendix 1

PROVISIONAL AGENDA AND TIMETABLE

12th session of the Intergovernmental Council of the Management of Social Transformations (MOST) Programme

UNESCO House, Paris (Fontenoy Building, Room XI)

1-2 June 2015

1 June 2015, Monday

10.00-11.30 Opening session

Opening statements (agenda item 1)

- Her Excellency, Ms Alicia Kirchner, President of the MOST Intergovernmental Council, Minister of Social of Development, Republic of Argentina
- Ms Nada Al-Nashif, Assistant Director-General for Social and Human Sciences, UNESCO

Adoption of agenda (agenda item 2)

Election of Rapporteur (agenda item 3)

11.30-13.00 Reporting session

Activity reports (agenda item 4)

Presentations by the IGC Bureau Members:

Her Excellency, Ms Alicia Kirchner, President of the MOST IGC

Vice-Presidents:

Group I: Mr Jan Monteverde Haakonsen, Special Advisor, Research Council of Norway and Member of the National Commission for UNESCO representing Norway for Western Europe and North America

Group II: Mr Ľubomir Faltan, Senior Researcher, Institute for Sociology, Slovak Academy of Science representing Slovakia for Eastern Europe

Group III: His Excellency Mr Galo Mora Witt, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Permanent Delegate of Ecuador to UNECO, representing Ms Bety Tola, Minister of Economic and Social Inclusion, Ecuador, for Latin America and the Caribbean

Group IV: Dr Noorul Ainur Mohd. Nur, Secretary-General, Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation, representing Malaysia for Asia and the Pacific

Group Va: Ambassador Mary Khimulu, former Permanent delegate from Kenya to UNESCO, representing Kenya for Africa

Group Vb: Mr Jassim Mohd Al-Ali, Chief of Section, Solution of conflicts, Sector for International Organizations of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, representing the United Arab Emirates for the Arab Region

Report of SAC (agenda item 5)

Mr Emir Sader, Chair of the Scientific Advisory Committee of MOST,

13.00-15.00 Lunch Break

15.00-18.00 Panel on MOST's strategic priorities in the context of Post-2015 (agenda item 6)

Chair: Her Excellency, Ms Alicia Kirchner, President of the MOST IGC

Panelists: MOST IGC Vice-Presidents

Ms Nada Al-Nashif, Assistant Director-General for Social and Human Sciences, UNESCO

18:30-20:00 Official reception

2 June 2015, Tuesday

10.00-12.00 Discussion of MOST School guidelines (agenda item 7)

Introduction by the Secretariat

12.00-12.30 Administrative matters

Interim Report on the Audit of the Governance of UNESCO and Dependent Funds, Programmes and Entities (agenda item 8)

Introduction by the Secretariat

12.30-15.00 Lunch Break

15.00-17.00 MOST's co-operation with existing and new partners and co-operation (agenda item 9)

Ms Nicola Harrington-Buhay, Deputy Director of OECD Development Centre

Mr Pascal von Griethuysen, Coordinator, Sustainable Development Programme, United Nations Research Institute for Sustainable Development

Mr Mathieu Denis, Acting Executive Director, the International Social Science Council

Mr Oleg Serezhin, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations

17.00-18.00 Adoption of draft decisions and closing session (agenda item 10)

17.30-18.00 Closing statements (agenda item 11)

Her Excellency, Ms Alicia Kirchner, the President of the MOST IGC, Minister of Social Development,
Government of the Republic of Argentina

Ms Nada Al-Nashif, Assistant Director-General for Social and Human Sciences, UNESCO

Appendix 2

PARTICIPANTS

Member States of the Intergovernmental Council

President

H.E. Ms Alicia Kirchner, Minister of Social Development, Argentina

accompanied by

H.E. Mr Miguel Angel Estrella, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Permanent Delegate

Dr Matilde Morales, Executive Secretary of the National Council for Social Policy Coordination, Ministry of Social Development

Ms Romina Caravello, Advisor to the Minister

Ms Margarita Zelaya, Advisor to the Minister

Ms Nelida Contreras de Ecker, Minister plenipotentiary, Deputy Permanent Delegate

Mr Pablo Prospero, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Worship

Vice-Presidents

Group I: Norway: Mr Jan Monteverde Haakonsen, Special Advisor, Research Council of Norway and Member of the Norwegian National Commission to UNESCO

accompanied by

Ms Mery Bijapcer, Intern

Group II: Slovakia: Mr Lubomir Faltan, Senior Researcher, Institute for Sociology, Slovak Academy of Science

Group III: Ecuador: H.E. Ms Beatriz Tola Bermeo, Minister of Economic and Social Inclusion

represented by

H.E. Mr Galo Mora Witt, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Permanent Delegate of Ecuador to UNESCO

Group IV: Malaysia: Dr Noorul Ainur Mohd Nur, Secretary-General, Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development

accompanied by

Ms Sabariah Hassan, Secretary General of Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development

Mr Mohamad Zulkifli Mohamed, Ambassador, Permanent Delegate of Malaysia to UNESCO

Mr Wee Beng Ee, Deputy Secretary General of Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development

Dr Mohd Nor Azman Hassan

Ms Sharifah Nazira Syed Basir Ahmad

Mr Tariq Yahya Osman

Ms Nor Latifah Hussin

Group Va: Kenya: Ambassador Mary M. Khimulu, former Ambassador and Permanent Delegate to UNESCO

accompanied by

Ambassador Professor George I. Godia, Ambassador and Permanent Delegate, Permanent Delegation of the Republic of Kenya to UNESCO

Mr John Paul Oluoch, Senior Research Assistant, Permanent Delegation of the Republic of Kenya to UNESCO

Group Vb: United Arab Emirates: Mr Jassim Mohd Al-Ali, Chief of Section for Conflict Resolution, Sector for International Organizations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

accompanied by

Mr Fouad Bouha Nsour, Permanent Delegation of the United Arab Emirates to UNESCO

Other Member States

Algeria

Mr Saïd Khelifi, Deputy Permanent Delegate to UNESCO

Brazil

H.E. Ms Eliana Zugaib, Ambassador, Permanent Delegate to UNESCO

Mr Fabio Mendes Marzano, Minister Counsellor, Deputy Permanent Delegate to UNESCO

Mr Geraldo Cordeiro Tupynamba, Counsellor, Permanent Delegation to UNESCO

Cameroon

Ms Elizabeth Manga Bessem, First Secretary, Permanent Delegation of Cameroon to UNESCO

Ms Ntonifor

Canada

Professor Normand Labrie, Director of the Fonds de recherche du Québec – Société et culture, Full Professor with the Faculty of Education of the University of Toronto (Ontario Institute for Studies in Education-OISE)

Ms Dominique Levasseur, Senior Programme Officer, Permanent Delegation of Canada to UNESCO

China

Professor Zhao Kebin, Institute of Social Science

Professor Fang Lijie, Institute of Social Science

Professor Jia Li, Director of the Division of International Organizations and Multilateral Cooperation, International Cooperation Bureau of the Chinese Academy of Social Science

Mr Wang Meng, Third Secretary, Permanent Delegation to UNESCO

Congo

Mr Leon Lombali-Badi, Second Counsellor, Permanent Delegation of Congo to UNESCO

Costa Rica

Ms Laura Arguedas Mejía, Advisor to the Vice President responsible for human rights, development, governance and public policies

Czech Republic

Mr Zdenek Uherek

Greece

Ms Nicosia, Intern, Permanent Delegation of Greece to UNESCO

Honduras

Mr Carlos Enrique Maradiaga Melara, Chargé d'affaires , Deputy Permanent Delegate to UNESCO

Hungary

Mr Balint Hudecz, Secretariat of the Hungarian National Commission for UNESCO

Indonesia

Dr Henny Warsilah, Programme Director of MOST UNESCO Indonesia

Lithuania

Ms Violeta Baltrusyte, Deputy Permanent Delegate to UNESCO

Madagascar

Mr Ny Toky Andriamanjato, Chargé d'Affaires, Deputy Permanent Delegate to UNESCO

Mr Tianarivelo Razafimahefa, Cultural Counsellor, Permanent Delegation to UNESCO

Mali

Mr Adama Diarra, National Solidarity Fund

Mexico

Mr Rodrigo Mendivil Ocampo, Second Secretary, Permanent Delegation to UNESCO

South Africa

Ms Dimakatso Radebe, Second Secretary, Permanent Delegation to UNESCO

Spain

Mr Aníbal González Pérez, Head of the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, Ministry of Economy

Ms Ana Viladevall, Intern, Permanent Delegation of Spain to UNESCO

Thailand

Mr Pramote DUANG-IM, Deputy Permanent Delegate of the Kingdom of Thailand to UNESCO

Turkey

Associate Professor Dr Mehmet Akif Kireççi, Chair of MOST and Intercultural Dialogue Committee of the Turkish National Commission for UNESCO

Ms Büşra Selenay Yakici, Sector Expert for the Turkish National Commission for UNESCO

Observers

Azerbaijan

Mr Rustanov

Colombia

Ms Silvia Amay, Minister Plenipotentiary, Deputy Permanent Delegate to UNESCO

Ms Juliana Angulo, Adviser, Permanent Delegation of Colombia to UNESCO

Chad

Mr Maamoune Charfadine, First Secretary, Permanent Delegation of Chad to UNESCO

Cuba

Ms Yahima Esquivel

Dominican Republic

H.E. Mrs Laura Faxas, Ambassador, Permanent Delegate to UNESCO

Ms Martha de la Rosa, Counsellor, Permanent Delegation of the Dominican Republic to UNESCO

Ghana

Mr Abu Osuman

Kuwait

Dr Muhammad Al-Shatti, Deputy Permanent Delegate to UNESCO

Morocco

Ms Hanane Bouarourou, Counsellor, Permanent Delegation of Morocco to UNESCO

Paraguay

Ms Maria Victoria Benitez Martinez, Administrative Assistant, Permanent Delegation of Paraguay to UNESCO

Saint Lucia

Ms Véra Lacoeylthe, Minister Counsellor, Deputy Permanent Delegate to UNESCO

Mr Oskar Gradziel

Senegal

Mr Talla Gueye, First Counsellor, Permanent Delegation of Senegal to UNESCO

Mr Diop Aida Laye

Serbia

Ms Aleksandra Kovac, Minister Counsellor

Ms Hana Hudak, Permanent Delegation of the Republic of Serbia to UNESCO

United Republic of Tanzania

Mr Mohammed Shabaan SHEYA, Minister Plenipotentiary, Deputy Permanent Delegate to UNESCO

Uruguay

Mr Pedro Keuroglan, Minister Counsellor, Permanent Delegation of Uruguay to UNESCO

Venezuela

H.E. Mr Luis Alberto Crespo, Ambassador, Permanent Delegate of Venezuela to UNESCO

Mr David Alejandro Osorio-Meneses, Minister Counsellor, Permanent Delegation of Venezuela to UNESCO

Ms Sofia Teresita Managlia Melendez, First Secretary, Permanent Delegation of Venezuela to UNESCO

Members of the Scientific Advisory Committee

President

Mr Emir Sader (Brazil), Director, Laboratório de Políticas Públicas

Ms Fadia Kiwan (Lebanon), Professor at the University of Saint-Joseph in Beirut and Director for the Political Science Institute and member of the Board to the United Nations University

Ms Zdenka Mansfeldova (Czech Republic), Deputy Director, Institute of Sociology, Academy of Sciences,

Mr Michael Woolcock (Australia), Lead Social Development Specialist in the World Bank Development Research Group and Lecturer in Public Policy at Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University

H.E. Ms Judi Wakhungu (Kenya), Cabinet Secretary for Environment, Water and Natural Resources, was unable to attend the meeting.

Appendix 3

DECISIONS OF THE TWELFTH SESSION OF THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL COUNCIL OF THE MOST PROGRAMME

Recalling the recommendations of its Eleventh Session (March 2013), and in particular *restating* the mission of MOST to strengthen the links between science and policy; to promote social sciences, especially in countries where this field is less developed; and to support governments in recognizing how societies may benefit from social sciences and their transdisciplinary approaches to social transformations conducive to more inclusive and equitable societies;

Taking note of the Medium-Term Strategy, Programme, Budget and Expenditure Plan adopted by the General Conference at its 37th session in November 2013;

Welcoming the vision proposed by the Director-General for the work of the MOST Programme to contribute to the post-2015 development agenda, in particular with respect to social inclusion for sustainable development, along with the review of strategic issues proposed by the Member States and the Secretariat for its consideration;

Commending the IGC MOST President and Vice-Presidents for their respective initiatives to advance social science knowledge and capacities in their regions, as well as the use thereof to support policies towards inclusive social transformations;

Agreeing that a fresh perspective is needed to recast core activities, by and within regions, in line with the criteria of relevance to current challenges, efficiency and high-level visibility for enhanced and sustained impact;

THE MOST INTERGOVERNMENTAL COUNCIL (IGC):

1. Calls on the MOST Programme to continue to foster the link between science and policy, knowledge production and mobilization, shaping and informing UN processes within the framework of the post-2015 development agenda, in particular through active and dynamic cooperation between the Secretariat and other UN agencies, funds and programmes, as well as other relevant intergovernmental entities;
2. Reasserts the functions ascribed to the IGC by Article VII of its Statutes and commits in particular to promoting the participation of Member States in the MOST programme, seeking the necessary resources for its implementation, and facilitating the establishment of MOST activities at the national level and communication between them;
3. Encourages Member States and SAC members to advocate for the MOST Programme and mobilize the knowledge resources of relevant partnerships with, *inter alia*, research communities, policy and decision makers, civil society institutions, private sector, media, and other relevant stakeholders;

4. Underlines the need for MOST to work closely with youth, women and their representative organizations, fully reflecting their distinctive concerns, such as intergenerational equity, in its substantive activities;
5. Reaffirms the flagship status of MOST Ministerial Forums as essential mechanisms to promote the link between science and policy decision-making, knowledge production, and mobilization, and encourages Member States to host and support their future organization and to promote effective follow-up of their decisions;
6. Requests the Director-General to submit to the IGC, at the Extraordinary Session to be convened during the 38th session of the General Conference for the primary purpose of elections to the Bureau, a comprehensive draft strategy for the MOST Programme, previously consulted with the Bureau, with a view to presenting the strategy as adopted to the Executive Board at its 199th session in April 2016;
7. Welcoming the proposals tabled at the present session, under agenda item 7, on “MOST Schools 2016-2017: Strategic Overview and Guidelines”, requests the Secretariat to complete the guidelines for MOST Schools within the framework of the aforementioned draft strategy and to commence implementation on a pilot basis, taking account of the views expressed by the IGC and by SAC; and encourages Member States to integrate MOST Schools in national capacity-building programmes in ways that will favour ownership of the MOST Programme by Member States, while seeking the necessary resources for the organization thereof;
8. Considering the valuable role of MOST National Committees in promoting engagement with MOST at the national level, encourages Member States to establish them, where they do not already exist, and to mobilize them to support international cooperation within the MOST Programme;
9. Reaffirms the important role of SAC and requests SAC to submit specific proposals to the aforementioned Extraordinary Session;
10. Taking note of the *Interim Report on the Audit of the Governance of UNESCO and Dependent Funds, Programmes and Entities* (document 196 EX/23 INF.5), and in particular of the remarks concerning the MOST programme in annex 6 thereof, requests the Secretariat to submit to the aforementioned Extraordinary Session, after consultation with the Bureau, proposals for revision of the Statutes and Rules of Procedure;
11. Requests the Director-General, pursuant to Rule 3.2 of the Rules of Procedure, to convene the Thirteenth Ordinary Session of the IGC from 13 to 15 March 2017 in Paris and to convene, pursuant to Rule 8.4 of the Rules of Procedure and with a view to effective follow-up of the present decisions and preparation of the aforementioned Ordinary Session, a meeting of the Bureau, to be held at a date to be confirmed in September 2016.