

Paris, France, October 28 (Infosplusgabon) - UNESCO's General Conference, taking place in Paris, France, from 30 October to 14 November, will bring together all of the Organization's 195 Member States to its 39th session to approve the Organization's budget and the direction of its programmes and activities for the next two years.

According to the UNESCO media outlet, a new UNESCO Director General will take office during the conference.

It said that on 31 October, Heads of State and Government will attend UNESCO's Leaders Forum on the theme 'Sustainable Development and UNESCO's Role in the Multilateral System'.

The following leaders, it indicated, are scheduled to speak at the Leaders Forum - Bakir Izetbegovic, Member of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina'; Hery Rajaonarimampianina, President of Madagascar; Ibrahim Boubacar Keïta, President of Mali; Paul Kagame, President of Rwanda; Mr Mohammad Sarwar Danesh, Vice President of Afghanistan; Henry Puna, Prime Minister of Cook Islands; and Miroslav Lajčák, President of the 72nd session of the United Nations General Assembly.

Some 200 government ministers, notably education and culture ministers, will also attend the General Conference, which on 10 November, is expected to endorse the nomination of Audrey

Azoulay to the post of Director-General of UNESCO.

The Organization's Executive Board, a 58-member body that prepares the General Conference and oversees the work of the Secretariat, elected Ms Azoulay as its nominee for the post on 13 October.

Also during the General Conference, Member States are expected to accept the application of New Caledonia to become an Associate Member of UNESCO

On the evening of 10 November, delegates will pay tribute to outgoing Director-General Irina Bokova and the new Director-General will take office on 15 November.

A rich programme of side-events is planned for the General Conference, with presentations and debates on key issues in each of UNESCO's fields of competence: education, science, and culture, as well as information and communication.

Notable side-events include:

1 November: Strengthening accountability in the implementation of SDG4 - Education 2030 - Two ministerial panel debates on mechanisms to promote accountability and transparency will bring together 13 education ministers who will also examine how greater accountability can benefit funding for education, and how to move the Education 2030 agenda forward.

6 November: Presentation of World Trends in Freedom of Expression and Media Development: 2017/18 Global Report Presentation of the key findings of the 2017/18 flagship report World Trends in Freedom of Expression and Media Development and an expert panel discussion on journalists' safety.

6 November: Responding to Cultural Cleansing, Preventing Violent Extremism - Round table on the challenges of heritage protection in conflict and the link between heritage protection and the fight against sectarian violence, cultural cleansing and violent extremism with the participation, notably, of the culture ministers of Iraq and Mali, the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court, and the UN Secretary-General's Special Rapporteur in the field of cultural rights.

10 November: Ethics of Robotics - Presentation of the report on the ethics of robotics of the UNESCO World Commission on the Ethics of Scientific Knowledge and Technology (COMEST), followed by a debate on how UNESCO can assist Member States in addressing ethical questions relating to technological innovation, notably robotics and artificial intelligence.

It will include a demonstration of robotics technology.

FIN/INFOSPLUSGABON/TRE/GABON 2017

© Copyright Infosplusgabon