

UNESCO LETTER ON BEHALF OF NORDIC DELEGATIONS TO THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL*

9th October 1984

Dear Director-General,

Acting upon instructions from our respective Governments we have the honour of conveying to you the joint message as follows:

As you are certainly aware, the Nordic Governments attach great importance to the United Nations and its specialized Agencies. Member States should and must do their utmost to strengthen the United Nations' system in order to promote constructive international cooperation. With regard to UNESCO, the Nordic Governments have continuously acted in this spirit and will do so in the future.

The Nordic Governments have followed recent developments in UNESCO with concern. There is no doubt that the organization finds itself in a critical situation. The future of the organization depends on extensive reforms being undertaken. Such reforms are urgent and should be carried out within the framework of the present constitution of UNESCO.

We therefore welcomed the initiatives for reform taken by yourself as well as by the Executive Board. We appreciate the many constructive proposals made by the working groups set up by you and look forward to their early implementation.

The temporary committee set up by the Executive Board has made progress in its deliberations. Ideas that merit further consideration have been put forward and a number of useful proposals made which we trust will be accepted by the Board. In particular we find the proposals regarding programme elaboration and implementation, as well as personnel questions, of importance. It is, of course, vital that they be implemented without delay. We are confident that you will give your full cooperation to that effect. We are, moreover, convinced that the executive board will need to make appropriate arrangements to follow up the work of the temporary committee and to monitor implementation of the reforms.

These measures are significant steps towards a better and more effective UNESCO. Nevertheless, it is our considered opinion that even this is not sufficient for UNESCO to fulfil its mission adequately. To achieve this, concrete measures in the preparation of the next biennial programme and budget will be necessary. The Nordic Governments have at a number of general conferences stressed the importance of concentration of the programme and of devoting a larger proportion of the resources to the most pressing needs in the sphere of UNESCO's competence. We have noted with satisfaction that the temporary committee has suggested programme concentration e.g. by reducing the number of sub-programmes and of programme actions. However,

*The text of this letter was made available by His Excellency E. Lyrtoft-Petersen, Danish Ambassador at Canberra.

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a simple regrouping will not be sufficient. Our joint reply to your consultation on the preparation of the next biennial programme and budget expressed our view in this respect in greater detail.

Your preliminary observations to the Board on the programme for 1986-87 provide a useful basis for discussion. The Executive Board should seize the opportunity to give guidelines for the necessary concentration of the next programme. But we would like to underline the importance we attach to your role in initiating and achieving concentration. In this expectation we look forward to receiving your proposal for the next biennial programme.

Yours sincerely,

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