



PRESS RELEASE

4 NOVEMBER 2015

MALAYSIA TAKES OVER CHAIRMANSHIP OF THE SCIENCE COMMISSION OF UNESCO

PARIS, November 3, 2015 – The 38th General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) today has unanimously endorsed the candidature of **Dato' Sri Dr. Noorul Ainur Mohd. Nur, Secretary General of the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation (MOSTI)** as Chairperson of the **UNESCO Science Commission**.

*“This appointment is an endorsement of **Malaysia’s strong commitment to support UNESCO’s reform agenda and a demonstration of trust placed upon Malaysia by member countries to advance the UNESCO’s science agenda.** Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) is increasingly recognized as an essential component for strategies in promoting **inclusive growth and sustainable development,**”* said Dato' Sri Dr. Noorul Ainur Mohd. Nur, who had served as the **Vice-President of the UNESCO Management of Social Transformations Programme (MOST) Intergovernmental Council, 2013-2015.**

As the Chair of the Science Commission for the 2015-2017 session, Dato' Sri Dr. Noorul will lead an oversight role of the Commission with respect to the UNESCO's **Natural Sciences Sector** programmes, namely, **freshwater, marine, ecological, earth and basic sciences.**

The Science Commission (SC) is one of the six Commissions, others being the **Education (ED); Social and Human Sciences (SHS); Culture (CLT); Communication and Information (CI); and Finance, Administration and General Questions, Programme Support and External Relations (APX) Commissions.**

“I would also like to express my sincere gratitude to the Malaysian Government for endorsing my nomination, which also reflects a recognition for **MOSTI as the lead Ministry in mainstreaming national STI agenda,**” she added.

This historic moment took place during the first day of the 38th Session of the General Conference. Malaysian delegation to the General Conference is led by **YB Dato’ Seri Mahdzir Khalid, Minister of Education.** Malaysia became a member of UNESCO in 1958 and is currently vying for a seat in the **Executive Board of UNESCO (2015-2019).**

End



Unit Komunikasi Korporat
Kementerian Sains, Teknologi dan Inovasi Malaysia
Phone: 03-8885 8141, Fax: 03-8890 3092
Email: ukk.mosti@1govuc.gov.my

ABOUT NATURAL SCIENCES SECTOR¹

UNESCO works to advance and promote science in the interests of peace, sustainable development and human security and well-being, in close collaboration with its Member States and a wide variety of partners. It is the only United Nations specialized agency, symbolized by the 'S' in the acronym, with a specific mandate for science.

Since its foundation in 1945 UNESCO has acted as a catalyst for the establishment of many, now leading, scientific unions and bodies such as CERN; and initiatives with far-reaching implications for sustainable human security and well-being, such as the Man and the Biosphere Programme, the International Hydrological Programme, and the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission, were launched in UNESCO's first decades.

Scope of Work

- Catalyses international cooperation in science;
- Promotes dialogue between scientists and policy makers;
- Builds capacity in science;
- Advocates for science;
- Acts as a platform for sharing ideas and standard setting;
- Implements programmes and projects in science throughout the world.

UNESCO hosts major international programmes in the freshwater, marine, ecological, earth and basic sciences. Science policy at the national and sectoral levels is a key part of UNESCO's work in science. Emphasis is given to developing countries, in particular to Africa and to ensuring gender equality in science. Cross-cutting themes include natural disaster reduction, biodiversity, engineering, science education, climate change and sustainable development in small island developing states.

It is increasingly recognized that solutions to today's global challenges such as climate change and youth unemployment need a multi-sectoral response and in this regard UNESCO mobilizes scientific knowledge in the context of its multidisciplinary mandate in education, culture, the social and human sciences and communication.

The Natural Sciences Sector, headed by Assistant Director-General Ms Flavia Schlegel, is staffed with around 120 people who implement programmes

¹ Source: UNESCO

through the UNESCO Headquarters in Paris and a network of field offices around the world.

Field offices with a regional mandate specifically focusing on science:

- Nairobi (Africa);
- Jakarta (Asia and the Pacific);
- Venice (Europe and North America);
- Cairo (Arab States);and
- Montevideo (Latin America and the Caribbean).

The International Science Programmes are central to the execution of UNESCO's work in the sciences:

- International Hydrological Programme (IHP);
- Man and the Biosphere Programme (MAB);
- International Geosciences Programme (IGCP);
- International Basic Sciences Programme (IBSP).

In addition to these programmes, a body with functional autonomy within UNESCO carries out a specific mandate on ocean sciences; the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC-UNESCO).

The Natural Sciences Sector also implements its programmes through:

- UNESCO-IHE Institute for Water Education, in Delft, the Netherlands;
- Abdus Salam International Centre for Theoretical Physics (ICTP), in Trieste, Italy;
- UNESCO Institute for Statistics, in Montreal, Canada; and
- a network of around 50 associated centres in the fields of water, renewable energy, science policy, biotechnology, geosciences, the basic sciences and remote sensing.

Natural Sciences Management Team

The Natural Sciences Sector, with a staff of around 120 people in UNESCO Headquarters and Field Offices, is headed by:

Flavia Schlegel,

Assistant Director-General for Natural Sciences

Assisted by directors of three divisions;

BLANCA JIMÉNEZ-CISNEROS

Director, Division of Water Sciences

HAN QUNLI

Director Ecological and Earth Sciences (SC/EES)

MACIEJ NALECZ

Director & Executive Secretary of the International Basic Sciences Programme

Programmes and activities are implemented through UNESCO Headquarters and the UNESCO Field Office network.

Around half of the 57 UNESCO field offices have a specialist in the natural sciences.