



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



Trinidad and Tobago National Commission for UNESCO

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ABOUT THE NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR UNESCO

Trinidad and Tobago National Commission for UNESCO (Established in 1970 by Cabinet Minute)

President:

(Since November 2007)

The Honourable Esther Le Gendre, Minister of Education

Chairperson:

Mr. Hart Edwards (former Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education)

Secretary-General:

(Since January 2006)

Ms. Susan Shurland

Structure of the Commission:

The National Commission consists of the following bodies:

- The General Assembly, which meets three times a year. It is composed of 30 voting members and one non-voting member in the person of the Secretary General;
- The Executive Committee, which meets once a month. The Committee is composed of the Chairman, the Deputy Chairman, the Chairs of the four Sector Committees, the National Coordinator of the ASPnet, the Chair of the Culture of Peace Committee, and the Secretary General of the National Commission;
- Four Sector Committees, which meet once a month or as often as necessary, on the convocation of their Chairs;
- The Secretariat.

The Commission organises sector committees (see below) representative of UNESCO's spheres of competence. They should be comprised of members of the Commission who are experts or whose area of interest is in the particular sphere of competence of UNESCO. The Chairman should be an expert in the area. The Sector committees should develop their operating criteria, and can co-opt individuals and organisations to serve. They arrange to meet once a month or as often as the Chairman requires.

The Commission also provides advice, facilitates project implementation, monitors progress and offers Secretariat support to other Committees such as the Memory of the World Committee, the Early Childhood Care and Education Council; the HIV and AIDS

Committee and other committees set up to implement special projects (e.g., UNESCO Participation Programme projects).

Secretariat of the Commission:

There are 9 full-time staff members and one part-time staff member in the Secretariat of the Commission: the Secretary-General; an Administrative Officer; a Documents Officer; an Accounting Assistant; one Clerk/Typist; two Clerk/Stenographers; a Driver/Messenger; a Janitor and a Cleaner (part time). A Librarian responsible for the Documentation Centre, and a Library Assistant, have both been posted at the Commission by the National Library and Information System Authority (NALIS).

Members/Composition:

The National Commission comprises members representing the Ministries of Education; Community Development, Culture and Gender Affairs; Foreign Affairs; Information; Planning, Housing and the Environment; Public Utilities; Sport and Youth Affairs; Social Development; Science, Technology and Tertiary Education; the Office of the Prime Minister; the Tobago House of Assembly; TTUTA; NHIERST; NALIS; the Chamber of Commerce; the Media Association of Trinidad and Tobago; NGOs; the University of the West Indies; the University of Trinidad and Tobago; the National ASPnet; UNESCO Clubs; and persons in their individual professional capacities.

Action areas:

Education for All; Literacy; Bioethics; Youth and Youth Development; Artistic, Cultural and Intellectual Life; Social Cohesion and Social Peace; Poverty Eradication; Sustainable Development; Observance of United Nations International Days and Years. Encouraging strong participation of youth in cultural and sporting activities, heritage protection, promoting environmental protection and awareness through Associated Schools Project Network and UNESCO Clubs activities; realisation of a culture of peace.

Committees:

The following Committees have been established by the National Commission for UNESCO:

- Trinidad and Tobago *Memory of the World* Committee
- Education Sector Committee
- Natural Science Sector Committee
- Social and Human Sciences Committee
- Culture Committee
- Information and Communications Committee
- Culture of Peace Committee
- School Media Project Implementation Committee
- Community Memory Project Committee
- Living History Series Committee
- Focus on the Caribbean Travelling Exhibition Committee
- Travelling Caribbean Film Showcase National Committee

In addition, the Secretary General is represented on the following Committees:

- National Commission for UNESCO Executive Committee
- UNESCO Clubs Executive Committee
- HIV and AIDS Committee (Ministry of Education)
- Early Childhood Care and Education Council (Ministry of Education)

- Archaeology Advisory Council (to be installed by the Ministry of Community Development, Culture and Gender Affairs)

Documentation Centre:

The Documentation Centre of the National Commission holds more than 4000 publications.

The Centre is administered by a Documents Officer. The Centre is currently undergoing an upgrade project and will offer a computerized catalogue system.

Publications:

The National Commission is in the process of publishing an Information Bulletin to relay information to stakeholders on a regular basis. The Commission produces an Administrative Report in English, as well as Reports issued in English on specific project activities.

Budget:

The Commission receives an annual budget (in the form of a subvention) from the Government. This allocation covers personnel expenditure and goods and services, including office supplies and maintenance, training, contracted services, minor equipment, promotion and publicity, hosting of conferences and overseas travel. Contributions to UNESCO, the Organization, must be sourced via the overall vote of the Ministry of Education.

Fund-raising:

The National Commission fund-raising efforts are subject to the financial regulations of the Public Service of Trinidad and Tobago. However, the Commission has attracted support in the form of collaborative ventures from diverse agencies and individuals in the development and implementation of projects.

The National Commission has collaborated with individuals who volunteered their expertise, UNDP, the University of the West Indies, governmental agencies, the Tobago House of Assembly, NGOs, the business and corporate sector.

Collaborative ventures enabled the National Commission to organize diverse meetings, to implement joint projects (including dissemination of information on UNESCO), to assist the participation of students in Associated Schools Project (ASP) Network exchange activities, and to participate in UNESCO Clubs' activities.

Cooperation with other National Commissions and UNESCO Field Offices:

The National Commission collaborates with National Commissions of the Latin America and the Caribbean Region as well as with other National Commissions worldwide. It also maintains good and regular working relations with the UNESCO Cluster Office in Jamaica.