

Draft report of the Executive Board Meeting of Asia Pacific Federation of UNESCO Clubs and Associations (AFUCA) held in Kathmandu, Nepal from
1-5 May 2012

The 21st Session of the Executive Board of Asia Pacific Federation of UNESCO Clubs and Associations (AFUCA) was held at Hotel Malla, Kathmandu, Nepal from 1-5 May 2012. Representative of the following member countries were present: Bangladesh, China, India, Kazakhstan, Nepal, Russia, South Korea, Thailand and Vietnam.

Mr. George Chirtophides, President of the World Federation of UNESCO Clubs, Centres and Associations (WFUCA) was present as a special invitee. In absence of AFUCA President Mr. Matsuda, Mr. Noguchi asked for the permission of the members to chair the meeting. Members greeted Mr. Noguchi with applause and welcomed him as the Chairperson of the Executive Board Meeting. In his opening remarks Mr. Noguchi thanked the Nepal Federation of UNESCO Clubs, Centres and Association & in particular it's President, Mr. Dambarbir Thapa, for hosting the Executive Board Meeting in Nepal, a beautiful country in Himalaya Region. Mr. Noguchi welcomed all delegates from member countries and thanked them for their participation. Mr. Noguchi also welcomed and thanked Mr. George Christophides for finding time to participate in the Board meeting of AFUCA.

As is customary, Mr. Noguchi invited the member to volunteer to act as reporters to draft minutes of the meeting. Mr. Dharendra Bhatnagar from India, Ms. Siriporn from Thailand and Ms. Furusawa from Japan, (representing the Secretariat of AFUCA) were appointed as reporters. Mr. Noguchi invited comments of the members on draft agenda circulated to them and asked them to formally adopt the agenda of the Executive Board after any suggestions/modifications & additions in it. Since there were no suggestions or additions, the agenda of the meeting was approved & adopted.

Taking first item on agenda Mr. Noguchi invited members to confirm the minutes/report of the extra ordinary session of the Executive Board held in

Seoul, South Korea, on 19th November 2011. He reminded the members that this minutes/report were sent to them long back, after the Executive Board meeting was held in South Korea. Mr. Dharendra Bhatnagar from India requested the Chairman to postpone this item and allow members to refresh them with the minutes/report. His request was supported by others & was accepted by the chair. It was decided to take up this item on the next day.

Next item was the report on the activities of AFUCA and presentation of the financial report. Mr. Noguchi invited Ms. Mariko Furusawa to present both reports. Ms. Furusawa, representing the secretariat of AFUCA, presented the activity report. She informed the members that continuing collaboration with the Mitsubishi Public Affairs Committee, AFUCA organized the Mitsubishi Enikki Festa 2008-2009 in 24 countries in Asia in which a large number of children from the region participated. She informed that this activity was started in the year 1990 in collaboration with Mitsubishi Public Affairs Committee and since then it is being organized every alternative year.

Ms. Furusawa further informed that “Ode to Peace Art & Cultural Festival” was held in Penglai, China in August 2011. Many AFUCA member countries participated in this colorful Art Festival. Mr. LAN from China informed that Penglai Peace Festival was started in the year 2000 and it was adopted as the regular activity of AFUCA in the 2008 Board meeting of AFUCA. Mr. Lan further informed that as a part of this event a Peace Prize is also awarded to AFUCA Members who have contributed in the promotion of Peace Culture in the Asia Pacific region. He informed that Mr. Dharendra Bhatnagar of India, Mr. Lee from South Korea and Mr. Dambarbir Thapa of Nepal are the recipients of the Penglai Peace Award.

Mr. Dambarbir Thapa requested Mr. Noguchi to involve National UNESCO Club Federations in the organization of Mitsubishi Asian Children’s Art Festa in their respective countries. Mr. Mahbubdeen Choudhary of Bangladesh also expressed the similar views. Mr. Dharendra Bhatnagar of India suggested that AFUCA secretariat should write to the National Commissions of the member countries to involve the National Federation of

UNESCO Clubs and Associations in this activity. Joining discussions on the activities of AFUCA, Mr. George Christophides informed the members that WFUCA is proposing to organize a meeting in Kazakhstan in September 2012 and AFUCA members will be invited to participate in it. Mr. Geroge Christophides also informed the members that Mr. Eiji Hattori, Hon. President of WFUCA has proposed a project on Etheical responsibility of the Nations in view of the Nuclear Power Plant leakage in Fukushima Daiichi, Japan on 13th March 2011 and also urged the member to support his request to United Nations to declare 13 March as the “World Ethics Day”. Members were of the view that this topic needs to be discussed in detail as people have different & varied views on this topic.

Presenting the financial report, Ms. Furusawa informed that Mr. Lee of South Korea has made a voluntary contribution of 1000 USD to AFUCA. She informed that a contribution of USD 5900 was given to Nepal Federation for hosting the present Executive Board meeting. This was approved by the members. She further informed that no expenditure was incurred on production & distribution of AFUCA newsletter, since no issue of the AFUCA newsletter was published & printed. She said no activity reports from members were submitted to the AFUCA secretariat, in absence of any material to be printed, newsletters were not brought out. Mr. Noguchi requested all members to periodically submit their activity reports with photographs. Mr. Thang of Vietnam informed that he has successfully launched the website of WFUCA and advised the AFUCA secretariat to do the same. Mr. Noguchi requested Mr. Thang to kindly accept the responsibility for the AFUCA website also.

Statement showing the yearly membership fee paid by the members & their dues were distributed to the members. Mr. Noguchi asked the members to pay the membership fee and the dues, if any. Mr. Dhirendra Bhatnagar from India enquired about the membership position of Sri Lanka & Mongolia. Mr. Noguchi informed that for the past several years there is no response from Sri Lanka. He said earlier Mr. Samardiwakara from Sri Lanka used to represent the Srilankan UNESCO Clubs Federation but for many years there is no representation or response from Sri Lanka.

Similarly Mr. Uthant from Magnolia represented both, the Mangolian National Commission & Mangolian UNESCO Club Federation but this year there was no representation from Mangolia. Mr. Bhatnagar requested the secretariat to make renewed efforts & contact the National Commissions of these countries to know the fate of UNESCO Club Movement in these countries. He also requested the secretariat to write to other National Commissions for UNESCO in Asia & Pacific region, particularly of those countries, where the UNESCO Club Movement existed before & were members of AFUCA in previous years. He recalled the presence of Malaysia, Philippines, Bhutan and Iran in the earlier Executive Board Meetings of AFUCA.

Mr. Bhatnagar informed that on request and support of UNESCO New Delhi cluster office, he helped in starting UNESCO Clubs and ASPnet Schools in Bhutan & Maldives and he was also in touch with the officials of National Commissions for UNESCO in Malaysia & Srilanka. Mr. Noguchi requested Mr. Bhatnagar to use his contacts to enhance membership of AFUCA. Mr. Noguchi also assured the members that the AFUCA Secretariat will also pay attention to revive & increase the membership of AFUCA.

Taking up the next item on agenda, Mr. Noguchi invited the members to present reports on their recent activities. Each country member presented its activity report. Commenting on the activity reports Mr. Noguchi congratulated member countries for their commitment in popularizing the programmes and activities of UNESCO and United Nations. He said the area & dimension of activities of the UNESCO Clubs & Associations is very vast & varied, it involves all sections of society. He said he is convinced & re-assured about the role of UNESCO Club movement in finding solutions to the world problems & implementing them in a cordial manner with help of their members. Mr. George Christophides also congratulated all members of AFUCA for their dedication & commitment in advancing the aims, objectives & ideals of UNESCO. He said as the President of WFUCA he had opportunities to attend the meetings of the regional federations of UNESCO Clubs and he is of the opinion that AFUCA is not only the oldest

but most active regional federation of UNESCO Clubs & Associations. He said that he is involved with the UNESCO Club movement for more than 3 decades and have attended all World Congress of WFUCA since its inception in 1981. He recalled the contribution of AFUCA in formation of the WFUCA. He also mentioned about his visit to Kazakhstan to finalize an international conference to be held there in near future. He said he is in touch with UNESCO headquarters in Paris to get some financial assistance for this program. He said it is for the first time he is attending AFUCA Executive Board Meeting & it is also his first visit to Nepal, he is very happy about his decision to participate.

Taking up the next item of the proposed activity plan for 2012-2013, Mr. Noguchi invited, Ms. Furusawa representing the Secretariat of AFUCA to unfold the plans. Ms. Furusawa said that 11th Mitsubishi Enikki Festa 2012-2013 will be held. Invitation letters & contract agreements have already been sent to 24 countries in Asian Regions which include all member countries of AFUCA. Mr. Noguchi informed that after tragic incident of earthquake & Tsunami in March 2011 which triggered financial recession in Japan, Mitsubishi Company wanted to suspend this activity but was persuaded by NFUAJ to continue it as this activity has become very popular and involve large number of children in the Asian Region. Mitsubishi Company accepted their request and continues to financially support this Art Festa.

Mr. Lan informed that Penglai Peace festival will not be held in 2012. He said that similar Art & Culture festivals are being held in other provinces of China and efforts are being made to invite AFUCA member countries to participate in those Art & Culture festivals.

Mr. Noguchi invited the proposals for holding the next session of the Executive Board of AFUCA. He said as per the constitution of AFUCA, ordinary session of the Executive Board of AFUCA should be held after every 2 years although extra ordinary session could be held at any time with approval of the members. Ms. Ekjitra of the Centre of International Understanding (CIU), Thailand offered to host the next session of the

Executive Board of AFUCA in Bangkok in 2014. This was welcomed by the members with a loud applause. She said the venue of the meeting & dates will be informed after consultation with her colleagues in CIU & the final decision will be taken in consultation with the Secretariat of AFUCA.

Mr. Noguchi asked the members if they have read the summary report of the Extra Ordinary Session of Executive Board Meeting held in South Korea as its approval was postponed on request of the members. Since they were no comments or suggestions, the summary report was approved.

The next item was election of the office bearers of AFUCA for the term 2012 to 2016. The constitution of AFUCA was circulated to all members. Mr. Noguchi asked the members to elect a President, 2 Vice Presidents, and Secretary General as required by the constitution. Mr. Noguchi offered to vacate the seat as the Chairperson to allow free & fair election of the office bearers. All members requested him to assume the position of election officer for the smooth conduct of elections. Accepting the responsibility, Mr. Noguchi invited the nomination for the post of President. Mr. Dharendra Bhatnagar proposed the name of Mr. Yoo of South Korea which was seconded by Mr. Lan of China. There was general discussion among the members about the experience and qualifications for the post of President of AFUCA. After discussions & consultations among the members Mr. Yoo was unanimously elected as the President of AFUCA. There were suggestions to take Mr. Bolat, the new President of Kazakhstan National Federation of UNESCO Clubs as the Vice-President but Mr. Bolat humbly refused to accept the responsibilities saying that he is new to the movement and due to his heavy responsibilities as the Vice Minister in Kazakhstan Government he is afraid that he may not be able to devote much time for AFUCA activities. However he assured his full support to the UNESCO Clubs activities at the National and Regional level. Miss Ekjitra of Thailand and Mr. Dharendra Bhatnagar of India were elected as Vice Presidents. Mr. Noguchi of Japan was elected as the Secretary General. Mr. Dambarbir Thapa of Nepal and Mr. Matsuda of Japan were nominated as Honorary Presidents of AFUCA along with Mr. Tao Xiping of China. Mr. Mahbubdeen Choudhary of Bangladesh was nominated as the Auditor.

Mr. Noguchi invited Mr. Yoo, the newly elected President of AFUCA to take over as the Chairperson of the meeting and to address the participants. Mr. Yoo thank all members for electing him as the President of AFUCA for a term of 4 years from 2012 – 2016. He said his involvement with AFUCA may be new but his association with UNESCO is very old. He told members that he had worked with the Korean National Commission for UNESCO and was involved with the UNESCO Club Movement in Korea for the past several years. He assured the members that he will discharges his duties as the President with full responsibility and try to introduce new ideas. He said he will expand the activities of AFUCA and its membership. He requested Mr. Noguchi to remain chairperson till the end of the meeting.

Mr. Geaorge Chirstophides congratulated the new team of office bearers of AFUCA and appreciated the understanding of members for such smooth conduct of elections.

Mr. Noguchi invited the members to raise any other issues or points for discussion, since there were none Mr. Noguchi on behalf of the outgoing president of AFUCA Mr. Matsuda, on his own behalf and on behalf of all the members thanked Mr. Thapa & his colleagues for successfully hosting the meeting & appreciated all arrangements. Mr. Thapa expressed his gratitude to the members for nominating him as the Honorary President of AFUCA. He thanked each & every member for coming to Nepal & participating in the Executive Board meeting. Mr. Thapa specially thanked Mr. George Chirstophides, President of WFUCA for finding time to attend the meeting. Members were invited to attend the workshop on Education in Nepal with Emphasis on Non-formal Education organized by Conference of Okayama International NGO Network (COINN) and National Federation of UNESCO Clubs, Centres and Associations of Nepal (NAFUCON), supported by Nepal National Commission for UNESCO to be held at World Bank Nepal Office on 3rd May 2012. In the afternoon of 3rd May members were invited to participate in ASPnet seminar followed by a reception hosted by National Commission for UNESCO, Nepal. He also invited members to visit “Lumbini” the birth place of “Lord Budha” and a UNESCO

World heritage site on 4th & 5th May 2012. The visit to Lumbini was optional on the liking of the individual members.

The meeting ended with thanks to the chair.