

STATUTE OF THE “ASPA-UNESCO CONTACT GROUP”

The Permanent Delegates and Representatives of the Member States of the Summit of South American-Arab Countries (ASPA), gathered at the UNESCO Headquarters, in Paris, on 27 October 2010, to hold the “Inaugural Meeting of the ASPA-UNESCO Contact Group”;

Considering the need to enhance inter-regional cooperation and interchange in the areas addressed by UNESCO – Education, Social and Human Sciences, Natural Sciences, Culture, Communication and Information;

Taking into account the wish of both South American and Arab countries to implement the cooperation initiatives recognized as priority in the declarations and plans of action approved by ASPA in the fields of culture, education, social affairs, science, technology and environmental affairs;

Considering the need for bi-regional dialogue and coordination on the matters of interest to South American and Arab countries within UNESCO;

Recalling that:

- a) the Final Report of the Meeting of the ASPA Committee on Cultural Cooperation held at the sidelines of the 35th General Conference of UNESCO (Paris, 14/10/2009) recommended the “setting up of a ‘Contact Group’, composed of representatives of both regions in UNESCO, with the aim of supporting the implementation of the Plan of Action within their areas of competence”;
- b) paragraph 5.2 of the Final Report of the VI ASPA High Officials Meeting (Quito, 26-27/2/2010) welcomed the outcome of the Meeting of the Committee on Cultural Cooperation on 14/10/2009, and suggested the establishment of a “Contact Group” for the representatives of both regions at UNESCO;
- c) paragraph 5.10 of the Final Report of the VII ASPA High Officials Meeting (Cairo, 21-22/7/2010) encouraged the ASPA–UNESCO Contact Group to “define its *modus operandi* and activities”, thereby giving the Permanent Delegates and Representatives of ASPA Member States present at the 27/10/2010 Meeting mandate to approve the current statute of the Contact Group;

Decide the following:

1. The ASPA-UNESCO Contact Group (henceforth referred to as “the Group”) is hereby created; it shall be composed by the Permanent Delegates and Observers of all ASPA members at UNESCO.
2. The Group shall act under the orientation of a bureau, composed by three representatives of each region nominated after consultations including the respective Regional Coordinators, to support the implementation of activities approved in the joint declarations and documents issued by ASPA, and as a forum for bi-regional dialogue and coordination to address the topics of interest to South American and Arab countries in the agenda of UNESCO.

3. The Group shall identify means to obtain, within UNESCO, institutional and all possible support for the implementation of the initiatives laid out in declarations and plans of action of ASPA, in coordination with the ASPA Cooperation Sectorial Committees.
4. The Group shall seek to promote dialogue and coordination of positions of both regions in the areas of common interest within the agenda of UNESCO.
5. The meetings of the Group shall be held at least twice a year before the regular sessions of the Executive Board of UNESCO, preferably in March and in September, or whenever deemed necessary.
6. The Group shall report its conclusions and suggested activities to the ASPA Executive Coordination Group.