United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

Organisation
des Nations Unies
pour l'éducation,
la science et la culture

Organización
de las Naciones Unidas
para la Educación,
la Ciencia y la Cultura

Организация
Объединенных Наций по
вопросам образования,
науки и культуры

منظمة الأمم المتحدة
للتربية والعلم والثقافة

联合国教育、
科学及文化组织

General Conference
39th Session, Paris, 2017

39 C

39 C/40
24 August 2017
Original: English

Item **4.6** of the provisional agenda

PROCLAMATION OF AN INTERNATIONAL DAY OF LIGHT

OUTLINE

Background: This item has been included in the provisional agenda of the 39th session of the General Conference following the decision of the Executive Board at its 200th session (200 EX/Decision 27).

Purpose: It presents the International Day of Light draft resolution which advocates for an annual celebration, every 16 May, for the continued appreciation of the central role that light plays in the lives of the citizens of the world in areas of science, culture and art, education, and sustainable development with the view to its adoption by the General Conference, following the endorsement by the Executive Board at its 200th session.

Decision required: The General Conference may wish to adopt the resolution contained in paragraph 5.

Job: 201701563

Background

1. The International Day of Light will be an annual celebration providing a platform for continued appreciation of the central role that light plays in the lives of the citizens of the world, in areas of the basic sciences, education, culture and art, sustainable development, and in fields as diverse as communications and energy.

2. The International Day of Light will provide also an enduring follow-up of the achievements of the International Year of Light in raising the profile of science and technology, and its application towards stimulating education, improving the quality of life worldwide, and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals set in the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

3. During the 200th session of the Executive Board, the PX Commission examined item 27, submitted by Ghana, Mexico, New Zealand and the Russian Federation. The Chair of the Commission recalled that the Executive Board would not examine the Annex to 200 EX/27 (presented below in paragraph 5), but only the draft decision for the Executive Board.

4. It is in this context that, after having examined document 200 EX/27, the Executive Board decided to endorse the proposal and to include this item in the agenda of the 39th session of the General Conference, and recommended that the General Conference at its 39th session adopt a resolution to proclaim 16 May of each year as the International Day of Light, along the lines of the draft resolution contained in the Annex to document 200 EX/27.

5. In light of the above, the General Conference may wish to adopt the following draft decision:

The General Conference,

1. *Having examined* document 39 C/40,

2. *Considering* that enhanced global awareness of, and increased education in, the science and technologies of light is vital to address challenges in areas such as sustainable development, energy, and community health, and for improving the quality of life in all countries,

3. *Stressing* that the applications of light science and technology are vital for advances in medicine, communications, entertainment and culture, and that light-based technologies respond to the needs of humankind by providing access to information and increasing societal well-being, and promoting peace through improved communications,

4. *Noting* the broad and significant impact of recent initiatives of UNESCO's International Basic Sciences Programme and the enthusiastic commitment by the International Year of Light and Light-based Technologies consortium to continue working with UNESCO in the framework of internationally-coordinated programmes of outreach and education,

5. *Recognizing* that it is essential to ensure that existing gains from previous initiatives of UNESCO in science and education are effectively followed-up and strengthened,

6. *Decides*:

(1) to endorse the proposal of the Executive Board for adoption of the celebration of the International Day of Light;

(2) to proclaim 16 May as the International Day of Light;

(3) to invite the Director-General to:

(i) promote the celebration of the International Day of Light;

(ii) grant support to the officially recognized local, national, regional and international activities carried out as part of this annual celebration;

(iii) encourage Member States, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, universities, research centres, civil society associations, schools and other local stakeholders to actively participate in the event.