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Items 3.3.3 & 5.1.3 of the Revised Provisional Agenda  

REVIEW OF THE IOCARIBE SECRETARIAT, 2012  
(IOC SUB-COMMISSION FOR THE CARIBBEAN AND ADJACENT REGIONS)  

**Summary**  
In the context of the Regional Strategy for Organizational Improvement adopted by the IOC Assembly at its 26th session in 2011 through Resolution XXVI-1, the Internal Oversight Office (IOS) of UNESCO carried out a review exercise of the regional structure of the IOCARIBE Secretariat in the period February–May 2012, upon request of the IOC Secretariat. The purpose of the review was to identify operational constraints and recommendations for the future. This document presents the main findings and recommendations of the IOS report and the response of the IOC secretariat. The original full IOS report is given in the addendum to this document.  

**Purpose of the document:** The Assembly is requested to propose a mechanism to provide the resources for a full-time IOCARIBE Secretary in order to start a two-year trial period during which the IOCARIBE secretariat will demonstrate enhanced performance.  

Financial and administrative implications are mentioned in paragraph 4.  

The proposed decision in paragraph 5 is referenced IOC-XXVII, Dec.3.3.3 in the Action Paper (document IOC-XXVII/2 Prov.)
Review of the IOCARIBE Secretariat

1. Upon request of the IOC Secretariat, the Internal Oversight Office (IOS) of UNESCO carried out a review exercise of the regional structure of the IOCARIBE Secretariat. The purpose of the review was to identify operational constraints and recommendations for the future. The review was carried out by IOS in the period February–May 2012, and is based on a desk study, interviews with staff and stakeholders, and visits to the Cartagena (Colombia) and Kingston (Jamaica) Offices, which jointly host the IOCARIBE Secretariat. The main findings and recommendations are presented below.

2. The findings of IOS are as follows:
   - The current division of the Secretariat between two locations is inefficient and the underlying rationale is not valid anymore.
     - The division of the Secretariat between Cartagena and Kingston leads to higher costs and efficiency losses.
     - The rationale for having the Secretary position in the Kingston Office is less clear than before.
     - The potential strategic advantages of Cartagena as the location of the IOCARIBE Secretariat (and UNESCO as a whole) are currently not fully exploited.
   - There are a number of positive achievements of IOCARIBE, yet the current situation is not sustainable in terms of (future) performance and results.
     - The main comparative advantage of IOCARIBE is its networking function. While this is still considered to be a strength, the Secretariat does not have the capacities to properly nurture IOCARIBE’s networks.
     - There are a number of successful programmes managed by IOCARIBE. However, resources are spread thinly which affects several of the programmes.
     - IOCARIBE is well positioned to attract extrabudgetary resources, yet has been unable to develop this potential.
     - Overall, the visibility of IOCARIBE’s programme activities, outputs and results in the region is low.
     - The collaboration between IOC Secretariat at HQ and the IOCARIBE Secretariat is less than optimal.
   - The Secretariat’s lack of technical staff is the core cause undermining its effectiveness and sustainability.

3. Overall, IOS concludes that the current situation of the IOCARIBE Secretariat is unsustainable and poses the following fundamental question: Is the current structure underlying IOCARIBE worthwhile strengthening, or is it something which should be fundamentally restructured, (partially) disbanded and/or integrated into existing institutional structures? Taking into account the time and data constraints of this exercise, and using triangulated evidence from stakeholder interviews and documentary evidence as a basis, the IOS review concludes that there are sufficient arguments for justifying and indeed favouring the scenario of strengthening the IOCARIBE Secretariat on a trial basis.

IOS Recommendations

- The main recommendation of the review is the following: The IOCARIBE Secretariat should be granted a trial period of two years to demonstrate enhanced performance and effectiveness, and to develop a strong basis for financial sustainability of the Secretariat’s operations in the future. During this period, the Secretariat in Cartagena should be reinforced and operate with a full-time IOCARIBE Secretary.
More specific guidelines on how to operationalize this recommendation are provided in the report.

The report also highlights a number of additional recommendations related to improving IOCARIBE’s performance and effectiveness. Most importantly, there should be a more transparent and constructive collaboration between the IOCARIBE Secretariat and IOC Secretariat at HQ.

Finally, one recommendation which concerns an audience beyond IOC is the following: The current underutilization of the Cartagena location should be brought to the attention of the Senior Management Team and scenarios for a more optimal use of the location by different UNESCO entities should be explored*.

4. The response of the IOC Secretariat to this recommendation was that it was not clear how and when this recommendation could be implemented. Under the present circumstances it is not possible to provide the resources for a full-time IOCARIBE Secretary. The implementation of the recommendation would be conditional on the leveraging of extra-budgetary resources by the IOC and IOCARIBE Secretariats with the Member States of the region and international financial mechanisms. Only then the two-year trial period could begin. Alternatively, a secondment could be sought from the IOCARIBE Member States.

Decision Proposed

5. In light of the foregoing, the Assembly may wish to consider the following decision:

Review of the IOCARIBE Secretariat, 2012

The Assembly,

1. Having examined the report of the Internal Oversight Office of UNESCO on the Review of the IOCARIBE Office (IOC/INF-1306),

2. Recognizing that the financial situation of IOC does not allow the appointment of a full time IOCARIBE Secretary from the regular budget,

3. Requests Member States from the Caribbean Region to consider supporting IOCARIBE by:
   (i) making a firm commitment for extra-budgetary contributions in the next five years for the full time employment of the present IOCARIBE Secretary and for activities;
   (ii) seconding staff to the IOCARIBE Secretariat;

4. Requests the Executive Secretary to convey the above decision to Member states in the Caribbean region in order to mobilize funds.

* At the time of the review, the IOCARIBE Secretariat was located in a UNESCO World Heritage Site with extra capacity to host additional offices and events. However, the building is now under renovation and the Colombian Government has made another office available to IOC. The IOCARIBE Secretariat has now moved to this new location.