United Nations Nations Unies

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Dear NGO Representative,

Subject: Follow-up to the decision of the Economic and Social Council

I am pleased to inform you that the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) at its Coordination and management meeting of 25 July 2016 adopted the recommendation of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) to grant **special** consultative status to your organization, **WE Foundation, World Education Foundation.** On behalf of all staff of the Non-Governmental Organizations Branch/OESC/DESA, please accept our heartfelt congratulations.

Consultative status enables an organization to actively engage with ECOSOC and its subsidiary bodies, as well as with the United Nations Secretariat, programmes, funds and agencies in a number of ways. In order to better understand this relationship, we take this opportunity to provide some critical information about the **privileges** that consultative status with ECOSOC confers on your organization, as well as the **obligations** that your organization will be required to meet under this relationship. **We therefore urge you to take the time to carefully review the information provided below.**

A. Privileges and benefits of consultative status

1) ECOSOC Resolution 1996/31

- Arrangements for consultations with NGOs are regulated by ECOSOC resolution 1996/31, adopted by the Council on 25 July 1996. Please review the entire resolution at: http://csonet.org/content/documents/199631.pdf for detailed information. It provides information on ways to participate in the work of the Council, including opportunities to organizations such as yours to consult with Member States and the United Nations system at large, based on the nature and scope of work that your organization undertakes. Consultative relationship with NGOs also enables the Council or one of its bodies to seek expert information or advice from organizations with special competence in a subject matter;

- Consultative status allows you to be informed about the provisional agenda of the Economic and Social Council;

- Organizations in general consultative status may request the Secretary-General, through the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations, to place items of special interest in the provisional agenda of the Council.

2) Attendance at meetings and access to the United Nations

- Your status now entitles you to designate official representatives to the United Nations Headquarters in New York and the United Nations offices in Geneva and Vienna. Your representatives will be able to register for and participate in events, conferences and activities of the United Nations, and organizations in general and special consultative status may designate authorized representatives to sit as observers at public meetings of ECOSOC and its subsidiary bodies, General Assembly, Human Rights Council and other United Nations intergovernmental decision-making bodies. Those on the Roster may have representatives present at such meetings concerned with matters within their field of competence. These arrangements may be supplemented to include other means of participation. To ensure your participation, please use the username and password that have already been assigned to your organization and login to the NGO Branch website at: www.un.org/en/ecosoc/ngo for more information.

- In order to obtain grounds passes, please use the same login and password information and follow the instructions carefully to designate your representatives for the current calendar year. Please note that representatives nominated by your organization are required to collect their grounds passes in person at designated locations in New York, Geneva and Vienna.

- Your login and password information should also be used to update your organizational profile and contact information at all times so that we can keep you informed of important communications from the United Nations in a timely manner. Please be aware that all communications from the United Nations Secretariat will be sent to the email address that your organization has provided in its organizational profile. It is the responsibility of the NGO to provide and update this information. Therefore, please set up your email address in such a way as to enable your organization to monitor incoming messages from the NGO Branch without interruption. **To this end, you are advised to check and update your organizational profile every six months at: http://esango.un.org/civilsociety/login.do**.

3) Written statements at ECOSOC

- Organizations in general and special consultative status are able to submit written statements relevant to the work of the Council on subjects in which these organizations have a special competence. These statements may be circulated by the Secretary-General of the United Nations to the members of the Council.

- Requirements regarding the submission and circulation of written statements are elaborated in resolution 1996/31. They include, but are not limited to, the following:

  (a) Written statements shall be submitted in one of the two working languages of the United Nations (English or French);

  (b) They shall be submitted within the time period indicated prior to the Council's meeting each year in order to allow appropriate consultations between the Secretary-General and the organization before circulation;

  (c) Written statements from organizations in general consultative status are limited to a maximum of 2,000 words;

  (d) Written statements from organizations in special consultative status are limited to a maximum of 500 words;

  (e) The Secretary-General, in consultation with the President of the Council, or the Council or its Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations, may invite organizations on the Roster to submit written statements. Provisions for these submissions, if approved, will be determined accordingly by the Council.

4) Oral presentations at ECOSOC

- Requirements for oral statements include, but are not limited to, the following:

  (a) The ECOSOC Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations makes recommendations to the Council about which organizations in general and special consultative status should make an oral presentation to the Council, as well as the items on which they should be heard. Such organizations are entitled to make one statement to the Council, subject to the approval of the Council;

  (b) Whenever the Council discusses the substance of an item proposed by an NGO in general consultative status and included in the agenda of the Council, such an organization shall be entitled to present orally to the Council, as appropriate.

5) Consultations with ECOSOC and its subsidiary bodies

- Commissions and other subsidiary bodies of ECOSOC may consult with NGOs in general and special status; and such consultations may be arranged at the request of the NGO. Organizations on the roster may also be heard by these bodies on the recommendation of the Secretary-General and at the request of such commission or subsidiary body;

- A commission of ECOSOC may recommend that an NGO with special competence in a particular field undertake studies or investigations, or prepare papers for the commission;

- NGOs shall be able to consult officers of the appropriate offices of the Secretariat on matters of mutual interest or concern. Such consultation shall be at the request of the NGO or the Secretary-General;

- The Secretary-General may request organizations in general, special and roster status to carry out studies or prepare papers.

6) Use of United Nations facilities

The Secretary-General is authorized to offer United Nations facilities to NGOs in consultative status, including:

- accommodation for meetings related to the work of ECOSOC;

- appropriate seating arrangements and facilities for obtaining documents during public meetings of the General Assembly that deal with matters in the economic and social and related fields;

- arrangement of informal discussions on matters of special interest to groups or organizations;

- access to United Nations press documentation services;

- prompt and efficient distribution of documents related to ECOSOC and its subsidiary bodies as the Secretary-General deems appropriate;

- use of United Nations libraries.

B. Responsibilities and obligations of NGOs in consultative status

1) Quadrennial reports

- Organizations in general and special consultative status are required to submit a report on the activities of their organizations in support of the work of ECOSOC and the United Nations **once every four years**, known as quadrennial reports, as per ECOSOC resolution 1996/31. This requirement is reinforced through ECOCOC resolution 2008/4 on "Measures to improve the quadrennial reporting procedures." In keeping with these requirements, **your organization will be required to submit its first report for the 2015-2018 period by no later than 1 June 2019** for review by the ECOSOC Committee on NGOs. Please download and carefully follow the guidelines for the submission of these reports on the NGO Branch website at: http://csonet.org/?menu=85

- In the intervening periods between the submission of quadrennial reports, organizations are advised to keep detailed records of participation in United Nations meetings and events, as well as cooperation with United Nations funds and agencies for inclusion in subsequent reports.

2) Suspension and withdrawal of consultative status

- As per resolution 2008/4, if an NGO fails to submit its quadrennial report by the due date of 1 June, following three reminders after the initial due date, the ECOSOC Committee on NGOs shall recommend immediate suspension of consultative status for the organization the following year for a period of one year.

- According to the same ECOSOC resolution 2008/4, NGOs whose consultative status has been suspended due to an outstanding quadrennial report will be required to submit the report within the period of suspension in order for the Committee on NGOs to consider, take note of the report and recommend reinstatement of consultative status.

- If, however, an NGO fails to submit the report within the stipulated period, the ECOSOC Committee on NGOs shall recommend to the Council the immediate withdrawal of consultative status. Once consultative status has been withdrawn by the Council, the NGO will no longer be entitled to the benefits and privileges of the relationship.

- The organization concerned will be entitled to re-apply for consultative status only after a period of three years, following the effective date of withdrawal of status.

- Additionally, consultative status of NGOs can be suspended for up to three years or withdrawn by the decision of the Economic and Social Council on the recommendation of its Committee on Non- Governmental Organizations in the following cases:

  (a) If an organization, either directly or through its affiliates or representatives acting on its behalf, clearly abuses its status by engaging in a pattern of acts contrary to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations including unsubstantiated or politically motivated acts against Member States of the United Nations incompatible with those purposes and principles;

  (b) If there exists substantiated evidence of influence from proceeds resulting from internationally recognized criminal activities such as the illicit drugs trade, money-laundering or the illegal arms trade;

  (c) If, within the preceding three years, an organization did not make any positive or effective contribution to the work of the United Nations and, in particular, of the Council or its commissions or other subsidiary organs.

Strict prohibitions against misrepresentation of consultative status

- NGOs in consultative status are **NOT** considered part of the United Nations system. As such, they are not representatives or staff of the United Nations, nor are they authorized to enter into business arrangements on behalf of the United Nations, or misuse the United Nations' name or logo for endorsement of an organization's activities in any way. Furthermore, consultative status does not entitle NGOs any privileges such as tax exemptions, diplomatic passports, travel privileges, etc.

- NGOs in consultative status are forbidden to use the United Nations logo on their stationery, business cards, websites, meeting banners, cars, office buildings, etc. Misrepresentation of your consultative relationship can result in adverse consequences for your organization, including suspension or withdrawal of status.

- If you wish to display your status on your letterhead, you can include the following statement below the name of your organization: "*Organization in (Category of status) with the Economic and Social Council since (year status granted).*

Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions. We welcome the opportunity to work with you and will be happy to facilitate your participation in the work of the United Nations, in particular ECOSOC and its subsidiary bodies, in the future.

Yours sincerely,

Alberto Padova
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