

**THE DEPUTY SECRETARY OF STATE  
FOR MANAGEMENT AND RESOURCES  
WASHINGTON**

Her Excellency  
Audrey Azoulay  
Director-General of the United Nations  
Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)  
Paris

Dear Madame Director-General:

As a founding member of UNESCO, the United States has played a fundamental role in the formulation and development of UNESCO's mandates and mission. We realize this mission has only increased in importance since its founding, and that it will continue to grow as UNESCO addresses new and emerging challenges, in addition to its original focus of cultural heritage preservation, science, and education.

Since our withdrawal from UNESCO on December 31, 2018, we have noted UNESCO's efforts to implement key management and administrative reforms, as well as its focus on decreasing politicized debate, especially on Middle East issues. We are grateful for your work, and that of the member states, in achieving significant progress on these and other issues.

Therefore, following continuing and thorough dialogue with the UNESCO Secretariat, I wish to inform you, on behalf of the Department of State, that the United States has the honor of proposing a plan for its return to UNESCO as a member state, for consideration by the General Conference. Should this proposal be approved by the General Conference, including the restoration of full membership privileges upon the United States' reentry to UNESCO, the Department of State intends to deposit the U.S. instrument of acceptance of the UNESCO Constitution in July 2023.

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We recall that U.S. legislative restrictions on contributions to UNESCO were triggered, pursuant to section 414 of Public Law 101-246 and section 410 of Public Law 103-236, in 2011. Such legislative restrictions created a legal impossibility for the United States to pay its contributions to UNESCO. However, the Fiscal Year 2023 appropriations act, now signed into law, contains authority for the President to waive such legal restrictions for UNESCO, which will allow the Government of the United States to pay its contributions to the Organization.

However, the difficulty for any state in the current context of national budgetary constraints to pay the full amount of contributions of more than eight years in one single annual installment is also to be taken into account.

Given these conditions beyond its contrai, the United States proposes a plan which should allow the General ContJrence to restore its full membership privileges upon its reentry to UNESCO, including a vote in the UNESCO General Conference and eligibility as a Member of the Executive Board. For this purpose, the United States intends to: {1) provide an assessed contribution for the remainder of 2023 that would accrue upon our deposit of an instrument of acceptance of the UNESCO Constitution; (2) working with the U.S. Congress, provide voluntary funding of \$10 million in support of UNESCO programming for Holocaust education, journalist safety, the preservation of cultural heritage in Ukraine, and science, technology, engineering, and math education in Africa; and (3) request that the U.S. Congress appropriate \$150 million for Fiscal Year 2024 to address both the U.S. assessed contribution for 2024 and contribute toward U.S. arrears, with the plan to request funding from the U.S. Congress for similar contributions in ensuing years, until U.S. arrears are fully resolved.

To address this proposai in July 2023, we are mindful that an extraordinary session of the General Conference needs to be called before that date, with 30days' notice given to member states. Accordingly, we wish to invite the member states of UNESCO to consider the convening of such an extraordinary session of the General Conference as soon as possible.

The Department of State would like to take this opportunity to reiterate its appreciation to the Director-General of UNESCO for the continued dialogue over the past several years and for her contribution to the current results.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Richard Verma". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping tail on the letter "a".

Richard R. Verma

Enclosures:

As stated.

## WAIVER AUTHORITY

*SEC. 7070. The President may waive section 414 of Public Law 101-246 and section 410 of Public Law 103-236 with respect to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization if the President determines and reports in writing to the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the President Pro Tempore of the Senate, and the appropriate congressional committees that to do so would enable the United States to counter Chinese influence or to promote other national interests of the United States: Provided, That the authority of this section shall cease to have effect if, after enactment of this Act, the Palestinians obtain the same standing as member states or full membership as a state in the United Nations or any specialized agency thereof outside an agreement negotiated between Israel and the Palestinians: Provided further, That the authority of this section shall sunset on September 30, 2025, unless extended in a subsequent Act of Congress.*