

Press Releases: The United States Withdraws From UNESCO

Press Statement
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Washington, DC
October 12, 2017

On October 12, 2017, the Department of State notified UNESCO Director-General Irina Bokova of the U.S. decision to withdraw from the organization and to seek to establish a permanent observer mission to UNESCO. This decision was not taken lightly, and reflects U.S. concerns with mounting arrears at UNESCO, the need for fundamental reform in the organization, and continuing anti-Israel bias at UNESCO.

The United States indicated to the Director General its desire to remain engaged with UNESCO as a non-member observer state in order to contribute U.S. views, perspectives and expertise on some of the important issues undertaken by the organization, including the protection of world heritage, advocating for press freedoms, and promoting scientific collaboration and education.

Pursuant to Article II(6) of the UNESCO Constitution, U.S. withdrawal will take effect on December 31, 2018. The United States will remain a full member of UNESCO until that time.

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