

30 April 2020

Dear members of the UWC community,

We want to start by thanking you and acknowledging all you have done, individually and collectively, to support UWC in so many different ways during this challenging time. Our sense of community has been inspiring, whether looking after students' safety, helping to bring them home or into generous host families, supporting their continued learning, reassuring them and addressing their concerns both currently and with regard to the coming academic year 2020/21. It is a great testament to the UWC movement and our values that we stand together to deal with our response to the COVID crisis.

We are in the next stage now and UWC schools and colleges, national committees and UWC International have been working at all levels - and at times literally around the clock - to develop scenario and contingency planning for the UWC movement going forward. One thing is certain: in a world that has changed fundamentally, our UWC education is more important than ever in shaping independent, critical and compassionate thinkers, selfless leaders and agents for change and social progress. Let us be clear: we plan for all UWC schools and colleges to be open for the start of the new school year in August/September (January for UWC Waterford)!

Opening may mean different things in different places, however, and for all schools it will be different from opening under normal circumstances. As much as we would like to see a full 'return to normal' - the detailed scenarios work undertaken by UWC International's COVID Response Steering Group and the advice of two epidemiologists within the group point to the unfortunate reality that 2020 will not see a worldwide bounce back to 'normality'.

There are great complexities and serious challenges to planning across our 18 campuses and close to 160 national committees under the current conditions of uncertainty. Travel and visa restrictions by governments and serious disruptions, particularly to air travel, are likely to persist well into the fall. Enrollment will be lower than usual as a result. Each school is developing contingency plans adapted to its particular context. In addition to reviewing necessary health facilities (including quarantining), the schools are preparing to offer online or blended learning during the first months of the academic year with the aim of serving a maximum of students on campus and also any students online due to later arrivals or quarantine. This is both a challenge and an opportunity. UWC has a long history as an educational innovator and we see great opportunities in leveraging the diversity and teaching expertise across our 18 campuses for some outstanding online learning.

We are dedicated to doing everything in our power to ensure that all current students, including international first year IB students will be able to return to "their" UWC or, if that should be impossible, to support them completing the final year of their IB Diploma at another UWC. And we will do our utmost, that all selected and nominated incoming students can begin their UWC journey as planned - if not at their designated UWC, then at another one of our schools and colleges. This will require agility in our response and some flexibility on the part of students and their families. But we are in this together. Where restrictions are such that incoming students

cannot reach any UWC with the capacity to accept them, we will offer deferred admission in 2021 wherever possible.

Finally, and perhaps most urgently, our current planning focuses on the financial implications that will inevitably follow the more immediate personal consequences of this crisis. A drop in enrollment will lead to a significant reduction in revenues and the financial effects of the crisis on donors will reduce their ability to support scholarships. Our schools and colleges are already working on saving costs. None of this will be easy. Yet we remain committed to fully delivering on the UWC mission, values and experience on all our campuses. For this we need your help: we will be launching a UWC movement-wide fundraising campaign to allow the thousands of alumni and friends of UWC across the globe, who care deeply about the future of this movement and the schools that they called home, to support UWC in its hour of greatest need. Further details surrounding this campaign will follow shortly and we will need all of your support to make it a success.

We understand that none of this is comfortable. But we also hope that, like us, you will feel encouraged by the united effort across the whole UWC movement. From the outset of the COVID crisis there has been a coordinated, movement-wide approach to the situation and it continues to direct our thinking and actions. This will give us the strength to get the UWC movement, our students and teachers, our staff and volunteers, through this crisis together.

Weekly communications and town hall meetings provide national committees with support, the UWC website continues to provide the latest updates to the wider community, twice-weekly calls of the Heads and of the COVID Response Steering Group and regular contact with the Committee of the National Committees serve to coordinate the UWC movement's strategic response to the crisis. On top of this, school and UWC International staff, as well as national committee volunteers, continue to work tirelessly to implement COVID response plans and support our current and incoming students.

Together, we will get through this. And we look forward to emerging on the other side with new learnings and a surge of community spirit in place. We thank you again for your dedication and commitment to UWC.

Best wishes and be well,