

**Intervention by the Danish Minister for Children,
Education and Gender Equality, Ms. Ellen Trane
Nørby**

Event:

**UNESCO 38 GC General Policy Debate,
5 November 2015**

Disposition

1. **Introduction**
2. **Denmark and UNESCO - what's important in our view**
3. **UNESCO in Denmark – the added value of UNESCO**
4. **Closing**

1. Introduction

- Thank you Mr. President
- Mr. President of the General Conference, Madame Director-General, Mr. President of the Executive Board, Excellences, Ladies and Gentlemen.
- Let me start by congratulating each and every one of us, Member States, Madame Director-General and all staff, with the anniversary and the achievements of UNESCO in the 70 years of its existence.
- We mark this anniversary at a time when Member States and the United Nations have come together and launched a new compelling agreement to eradicate extreme poverty and to set an agenda for global sustainable development towards 2030.
- Denmark is fully committed to follow up on the 2030-agenda nationally and in our cooperation with development partners.

2. Denmark and UNESCO - what's important in our view

- In the past years' ongoing conflicts with extremism and terrorism we have witnessed an unprecedented destruction and plundering of outstanding cultural heritage and cultural artefacts.
- We support the work of UNESCO and the Director-general in fighting these attacks.
- We also underline the importance of UNESCO's standard setting and operational work in the field of media development, freedom of expression and safety of journalists.
- Freedom of expression is a fundamental human right and a basic condition for progress and democracy which we need to protect and strengthen.

- Denmark is an active member of the council and the bureau of the International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC)
- And in the same line we are also co-organizing an important side event, next Friday, on Artistic freedom in connection with the session of the Culture Commission, and you're all kindly invited.
- We are aware that UNESCO for the last four years has had to deal with some extraordinary budget issues, and I wish to thank the Director General and her staff for managing to keep up the spirit and important programme activities.
- Looking back – only a week ago – the University of Aalborg from Northern Denmark co-hosted a conference on the impact of UNESCO. Numerous studies of UNESCO activities and examples of impact were documented.
- Looking forward we need to focus exactly on that same question: how do we further strengthen the relevance and the impact of UNESCO?
- We share the vision of the Director General to shape an organization more 'Fit to Deliver', and we encourage her to continue necessary reforms, not just of structures and costs but also of quality programme delivery for impact.
- Governance need to be lighter, less costly, more efficient and more strategic.

3. UNESCO in Denmark – the added value of UNESCO

- At national level in Denmark we are currently working to increase the visibility and relevance of UNESCO with a view to strengthen action across traditional administrative and policy silos.
- Let me mention just a few of the points where we see that UNESCO matters to us:
- Quality education in a globalized world must involve a global outlook and understanding of our interconnectedness, and UNESCO's values and inclusive work on Education for Global Citizenship and sustainable development really matters.
- UNESCO's Global Network of Learning Cities is a really interesting initiative, and a number of cities in Denmark are working to join the network and gain inspiration on how to put inclusive learning at the center of sustainable city development.

- In relation to Global Geoparks and the Man and Biosphere Programme we have interesting projects approved and under way, that help communities focus on their special qualities and potential and stimulate positive local development and dynamics.

4. Closing

- For all of these reasons UNESCO is important to us – and I believe – to the wider world.
- Thank you for your attention.