

**Statement by**  
**H.E. Mrs. Hanna Simon -Ambassador of the State of Eritrea to France and Permanent Delegate to**  
**UNESCO**  
**38<sup>th</sup> Session of UNESCO's General Conference**  
**(Paris, 3 – 18 November 2015)**

**Excellencies,**

**Honourable President of the General Conference**

**Honourable Chairperson of the Executive Board**

**Honourable Director General of UNESCO**

**Distinguished Representatives**

**Ladies and Gentlemen:**

I feel greatly honoured to represent the Government of Eritrea at this 38<sup>th</sup> Session of UNESCO's General Conference, which is, at the same time, celebrating the 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the adoption of UNESCO's Constitution. On this occasion, my Government wishes to recognize and congratulate the Director General, Mrs. Irina Bokova, for her tireless work, excellent leadership and vision in steering this renowned organization towards building a sustainable, peaceful and equitable future. The adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at the 70<sup>th</sup> Session of the United Nations General Assembly is most welcome for Eritrea, as the SDGs are in line with its own development vision and priorities.

UNESCO's mandates and ideals, as well as the quest for global cooperation have become more relevant and significant today, since we are facing an increase in major challenges such as global warming, terrorism, human trafficking, intolerance, and above all the destruction of irreplaceable human heritage and masterpieces. We can only respond to those challenges by giving the highest priority to Education, which is key to development of nations and societies. Member States must galvanize political commitment to advancing education. They should as well accelerate efforts to ensure that every citizen receives basic education and to invest in the quality of education at all levels.

Year 2015 has witnessed profound engagement of Member States in assessing the EFA movement and the Millennium Development Goals: the EFA journey from Jomtien to Dakar, and now in Incheon -Korea – has brought to light the immense experience gained, the challenges ahead, and now at this stage the foundation for a new vision in education. Eritrea fully endorses the Incheon Declaration and has already started the necessary preparations for the implementation of the Framework for Action.

We entirely agree with the central aim of Education 2030, according to which the implementation modalities will support “*country-led action*”.

**Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen, distinguished guests,**

Eritrea appreciates UNESCO's cooperation in the area of both tangible and intangible heritage. Over the last two years, my country has taken significant steps towards raising awareness about, and implementing conventions in the area. It has already embarked on the implementation of the Convention for Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage it adhered to in 2010: the Cultural Affairs Bureau at the Ministry of Education has laid out the Framework for Implementation in coordination with UNESCO's Regional Office in Nairobi, and extensive research is being conducted on oral traditions.

Currently, Eritrea is working on the inscription of the historic urban landscape of the city of Asmara in the World Heritage List. The final nomination dossier is scheduled to be submitted in January 2016. In line with this, Eritrea has promulgated, in September this year, a legal instrument for the protection and promotion of its heritage as a result of a lengthy consultation process with stakeholders and a workshop organized in collaboration with UNESCO.

**Mr. President,**

Eritrea acknowledges and appreciates the decades-long commitment of UNESCO to raising awareness on the need of sustainability in development for the sake of future generations. I would like to commend UNESCO for providing the scientific knowledge, capacity and policy advice for efficiently managing the most precious resources such as water.

UNESCO's financial and technical support to programmes related to computerization, audio-visual technologies, and renewable energy are invaluable to Members States in need: their reinforced continuity should be secured. Our participation in capacity building forums has encouraged us to formulate and implement effective science and technology policies and strategies. UNESCO's dedication and support has allowed our libraries, as well as our research and documentation centers to shift to the digital age. Thanks to the support from the sector of Participation Project Programmes -especially in the preservation of manuscripts and parchments, our archive materials are today attracting researchers. Our Research and Documentation Center is developing a website with the aim to facilitating public accessibility to the most important photographs and historical documents.

As signatory to the **International Convention against Doping in Sport**, Eritrea has established a National Committee and has been implementing activities such as awareness campaign, training and capacity building to enhance educational and ethical dimensions of sports.

Furthermore, Eritrea attended, in May this year, the International Conference on ICT and Post-2015 Education in Qingdao –China as an immediate follow-up to the WEF 2015. The Qingdao Declaration on ICT and Post-2015 Education outlines how technology can be used to achieve educational targets for equity, access, quality and lifelong learning in the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Eritrea urges UNESCO to continue its support to developing countries so that they can achieve the overarching *SDG Goal 4*.

**Mr. President,**

Eritrea supports the ongoing process of deep reform and innovation and is fully committed to working closely with UNESCO and Member States for the success of the ambitious Education 2030 and post-2015 Sustainable Development Agenda. In conclusion, I would like to remind that we need to join hands to pursue together the noble goals and objectives of our founding fathers and mothers -- building on common belief and confidence, and move forward to create a better, serene and peaceful world.