

STATEMENT BY

H.E. MR. LUNDEG PUREVSUREN, MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF MONGOLIA AND
CHAIRMAN OF THE MONGOLIAN NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR UNESCO AT THE 38TH SESSION
OF THE UNESCO GENERAL CONFERENCE

/Paris, 4 November 2015 /

Mr. President,
Honorable delegates,

On behalf of my delegation and in my own name, I would like to congratulate you, Mr. President, on your election to this high office and express my full confidence that under your wise and able leadership our deliberations will produce fruitful results. You can count on my delegation's full support.

Mr. President,

I am delighted to address, for the first time in my capacity as Minister for Foreign Affairs of Mongolia and Chairman of the Mongolian National Commission for UNESCO, the 38th General Conference of the United Nations Organization for Education, Science and Culture, well known as the "intellectual arm" of the United Nations. As this session coincides with the 70th anniversary of UNESCO, it is indeed my great honor to deliver to this august body the Government of Mongolia's views on the Organization's past tremendous achievements and future ambitious goals in promoting the noble cause of lasting peace.

Just two months ago, 193 UN Members unanimously adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which has 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 targets to take the bold and transformative steps urgently needed to shift the world onto a sustainable and resilient path. By successfully implementing SDG 4 "Ensure inclusive and quality education for all and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all" and its corresponding targets, we can complete the "unfinished business" of the worldwide movement for Education for All (EFA) initiated in Jomtien in 1990 and reiterated in Dakar in 2000. In this regard, let me stress the importance of the historic World Education Forum, taken place in May 2014 in Incheon, the Republic of Korea, for taking stock of progress made towards the EFA goals since 2000 and the education-related MDGs, examining the remaining challenges, and defining a new vision for education.

I am pleased to note that Mongolia was one of the co-sponsors of UN resolution 56/116 on the United Nations Literacy Decade (2003-2012) designed to provide an impetus for achieving the six EFA goals and developing literate environments. Literacy is the precondition not only for exercising

fundamental human rights but also for acquiring essential life skills and basic education, which are indispensable means for effective participation in the societies of the 21st century.

Nowadays basic literacy skills are not perceived as reading and writing only. It also comprises computing skills enabling people to function effectively in information technology-based or internet-based societies and make informed life choices. Hence, I pleased to note that to make its contribution to promoting online freedom, Mongolia successfully organized the 5th Conference of the Freedom Online Coalition in May 2015 in Ulaanbaatar. Online freedom as a “global commons” is essential for human and sustainable development as well as for the realization of human rights.

Furthermore, integrating education for democracy, along with civic education, into national education standards and programmes are crucial for the consolidation of democratic values and democratic governance and human rights. In this regard, I wish to underline that Mongolia’s endeavors aimed at developing a culture of democracy and fostering global citizenship, by initiating the resolution on Education for democracy adopted by the 67th session of the UN General Assembly in November 2012 and the resolution on Supporting the global citizenship agenda through education for democracy adopted by the 37th session of the UNESCO General Conference in November 2013 respectively.

Mr. President,

Science, technology and innovation are the key solutions to today’s tough economic, social and environmental challenges and to achieving sustainable development and building greener economies. Hence, Mongolia fully supports, and seeks to benefit from, the Management of Social Transformations (MOST) Programme, launched as part of UNESCO’s endeavors in social and human sciences sector and with the purpose to produce reliable and relevant knowledge for policy makers. Since the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is about social transformation, the MOST programme is very relevant to successfully achieving its all ambitious goals and targets.

As culture in its various manifestations is an enabler of social and economic progress and a driving force of sustainable development, its potential should be extensively exploited to build open, inclusive and pluralistic societies by safeguarding heritage, strengthening creative industries and encouraging cultural pluralism. Thus, mutual respect and open dialogue among cultures can lead to lasting peace and prosperity.

Mr. President,

I would like to conclude by stating that Mongolia highly values its longstanding cooperation with UNESCO and reaffirming our commitment to its noble ideals, vision and purpose.

May peace be in minds of women and men!

Thank you very much!