

**Address by H.E. Begum Karim Taj, Ambassador and
Permanent Delegate of the United Republic of Tanzania to UNESCO,
on the Occasion of the 38th Session of the General Conference of
UNESCO, Paris, France, 7th November, 2015**

President of the General Conference,
Chairperson of the Executive Board,
Director General of UNESCO,
Excellences,
Ladies and Gentlemen.

Please accept my heartfelt congratulations on your election as President of the 38th Session of the General Conference of UNESCO. I would like to assure you of my government's full support. I would also like to thank the President of the 37th Session of the General Conference, the Chairperson of the Executive Board and the Director General of UNESCO for their good leadership. As UNESCO celebrates its 70th Anniversary, my government continues to support the Director General in her efforts to ensure that UNESCO remains relevant, revitalized and resilient.

Mr. President

This General Conference is taking place at a time when the world is witnessing unprecedented socio-economic disparities among peoples and nations, radicalization and violent extremism, exclusion and the effects of climate disruption. The recent adoption by UNGA of the 2030 Agenda provides renewed hope in the next 15 years in which the 17 SDGs and 169 targets, several of them addressing the priority areas of UNESCO will define the global development framework. In particular Goal No. 4, "*Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all*", which has been informed by the Muscat Agreement and the unfinished business of EFA and education related MDGs defines Education 2030.

My Government commends UNESCO's participation in the elaboration of the post 2015 development Agenda and stands committed to the outcomes of the World Education Forum 2015, the Incheon Declaration and Education 2030 Framework for Action. My Government follows with keen interest the ongoing processes of developing indicators and appropriate global coordinating and financing mechanisms.

Mr. President

Education is key to sustainable development and to the eradication of poverty. Every child should have the opportunity to go to school and receive quality education that is relevant. Likewise adult literacy and lifelong learning should be given high priority. It is disheartening to note that as 2015 is coming to an end, a good number of countries, particularly from Sub-Saharan Africa are far from reaching the EFA goals and the education related MDGs. Quality education in particular has posed as a major challenge due to unsatisfactory learning environments, insufficient and poor quality of teachers. Education 2030 should therefore address these shortfalls if meaningful advancement is to be made to take up where EFA left off. My government is committed to meeting these challenges by working together with UNESCO and other development partners to promote UNESCO's ideals including education for sustainable development, education for a culture of peace, citizenship education, adult literacy, and lifelong learning.

Mr President

Embracing STI is a prerequisite to leapfrog development. My government is grateful to UNESCO for the long cooperation it has had in these areas, particularly in marine and ocean sciences and technologies, water, biodiversity, earth sciences and the review of the national STI system. My Government will continue to seek upstream policy advice in these and other areas including science-policy-society interface, youth policy and gender policy development.

Culture is a mover and driver of sustainable development. Tanzania is committed to conservation and has ratified several UNESCO culture conventions and has been playing an active part in their implementation. A number of our cultural and natural heritage properties have been inscribed on the World Heritage List. My government is aware of the development pressures facing some of these sites and consequently, various measures are being taken to address them. It is also my government's conviction that a way has to be found to strike a balance between conservation and sustainable development.

Mr President

Freedom of expression and access to information and knowledge are fundamental human rights and prerequisites to socio-economic development. However, disparities continue to exist between nations and among individuals in these areas. UNESCO should strive to bridge the information and knowledge divide by strengthening the CI sector. Additionally, efforts should be made to find means to combat unethical use of internet and rising cyberspace crime.

The United Republic of Tanzania is a living democracy committed to social inclusion and dialogue. Policies have been put in place to engage youth, women and disadvantaged groups in decision-making processes. Just two weeks ago, Tanzania conducted a peaceful General election and its people emerged united, thanks to its long cherished tradition of culture of peace consolidated by one common language, Kiswahili.

Finally, my Government welcomes a holistic and transparent reform of the Organisation that will make UNESCO more relevant, efficient and effective to Member States, taking into account their needs and aspirations. My Government also supports the pedagogical use of the General History of Africa, the promotion of STEM in Africa and the priority given to Africa and Gender Equality in all of UNESCO's programmes.

I thank you for listening.