

## Eighth plenary meeting of the 38th session of the General Conference

Friday 6 November 2015 at 3.10 p.m.

President: Mr Stanley Mutumba Simataa (Namibia)

### General policy debate (*continued*)

#### 1. The President:

Thank you very much. Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen, I declare open the Plenary Meeting of the General Conference which will once again be dedicated to the continuation of the general policy debate. I suggest that we proceed immediately to the national statements. Our first speaker this afternoon is Her Excellency Ms Maggy Nagel, Minister of Culture of Luxembourg. Your Excellency, you have the floor.

#### 2.1 Mme Nagel (Luxembourg) :

Monsieur le Président de la Conférence générale, Monsieur le Président du Conseil exécutif, Madame la Directrice générale, Excellences, Honorables délégués, la 38<sup>e</sup> Conférence générale a lieu à un moment crucial entre l'adoption du Programme de développement durable à l'horizon 2030 et la tenue prochaine de la COP 21. Je suis convaincue que pendant cette illustre Conférence, traditionnellement riche en échanges et en idées, l'UNESCO saura se montrer de nouveau fidèle à sa vocation de faire avancer l'agenda onusien dans les mentalités des femmes et des hommes.

2.2 Je salue expressément l'accent important mis sur la protection du patrimoine culturel et la promotion du pluralisme culturel en cas de conflit armé et exprime mon plein soutien à l'action de l'UNESCO. Il est inadmissible qu'on cherche à détruire non seulement des richesses culturelles mais aussi ce que le patrimoine représente en termes de valeurs, d'identités, de références et d'émotions partagées. On s'attaque à notre « vivre ensemble » et il est de notre responsabilité commune de réagir et de faire accepter que nos sociétés sont des « êtres culturels » et que, par conséquent, notre avenir passe aussi par la culture.

2.3 C'est ce que nous essayons de faire, notamment en tant que Présidence du Conseil de l'Union européenne : il s'agit de promouvoir l'intégration plus transversale de la culture dans d'autres politiques sectorielles, notamment la politique de développement et d'en arriver à une approche plus stratégique de la culture dans l'action extérieure de l'Union européenne tout comme dans l'Agenda 2030 de développement durable. Nous avons organisé une conférence sur le sujet à Luxembourg, les 3 et 4 septembre derniers, et nous avons par ailleurs mis la destruction du patrimoine culturel à l'ordre du jour de la prochaine réunion du Conseil des Ministres de la culture de l'Union européenne, qui se tiendra le 24 novembre prochain. Mais il faut aussi agir au niveau national, et c'est pourquoi je soutiens toutes les activités qui proposent une conjonction entre éducation et culture.

2.4 Monsieur le Président, à une époque où des jeunes filles risquent leur vie en allant à l'école, où des jeunes garçons sont forcés de devenir soldats au lieu d'élèves, la liberté de s'instruire et l'accès à une éducation qualitative et humaine sont, plus que jamais, indispensables au progrès de la société humaine. Il convient de promouvoir l'apprentissage familial et les approches d'éducation intergénérationnelle qui permettent une formation hors du cadre scolaire et qui brisent les barrières artificielles entre l'apprentissage formel, non-formel et informel. Avec l'afflux massif de réfugiés dans nos pays d'Europe occidentale, j'espère que l'UNESCO saura nous conseiller vers une intégration scolaire et professionnelle de milliers d'êtres humains déracinés. Les travaux de cette Organisation tendent à garantir aux générations futures un environnement sain, afin de leur permettre de s'épanouir dans un cadre de vie écologique et durable et dans un monde pacifique. Une belle illustration de ce but est le programme « L'Homme et la biosphère », destiné à protéger la nature au moyen d'un réseau de réserves de biosphères, tout en y préservant l'activité humaine.

2.5 Au vu de la publication imminente du Rapport de l'UNESCO sur la science, vers 2030, il convient de trouver un juste équilibre entre la promotion d'une liberté de la recherche scientifique, d'une part, et le respect de la bioéthique, de l'autre. Ici, j'aimerais évoquer l'inauguration récente de la Maison du savoir, la Maison des sciences humaines et la Maison de l'innovation, dans le Sud du Grand-Duché. Cette région où, au siècle dernier, une sidérurgie florissante avait créé les bases de la richesse et de la société multiculturelle du Luxembourg.

2.6 En ma qualité de Ministre de la culture, j'accorde une importance toute particulière à la liberté d'expression et à la création artistique. J'aimerais rejoindre la Directrice générale dans l'importance qu'elle attache à la liberté d'informer et de s'informer. Mon pays est particulièrement attaché à un journalisme libre, exempt de pressions, fondamental pour le fonctionnement d'une démocratie.

2.7 Et je voudrais à mon tour saisir cette occasion pour féliciter l'Organisation pour son 70<sup>e</sup> anniversaire. Une célébration conjointe des 70<sup>e</sup> anniversaires de l'ONU et de l'UNESCO a eu lieu, le 28 octobre, à l'Université du Luxembourg. De cette célébration est sorti un constat, celui de la pertinence de la mission de l'UNESCO dans un monde chaotique et son rôle à nous rappeler constamment les bénéfices d'une paix durable et à nous inciter sans relâche à partager et propager cet objectif impératif à l'avancement de l'humanité. Je vous remercie de votre attention.

#### 3. The President:

Thank you very much, Your Excellency. Our next speaker is His Excellency Mr Aloizio Mercadante, Minister of Education of Brazil. Your Excellency you have the floor.

#### 4.1 Mr Mercadante (Brazil)

*(address delivered in Portuguese; text provided by the delegation):*

Estou honrado em retornar à UNESCO, novamente na condição de Ministro da Educação. Retorno à missão de cuidar do futuro meu país, para reassumir o que a Presidenta Dilma Rousseff, em seu discurso de posse, definiu como "a prioridade das prioridades", por esse motivo, foi eleito por ela como marca deste mandato: "Brasil, Pátria Educadora".

Nosso país passou por grandes avanços nas últimas décadas. Iniciamos um longo processo de redução das desigualdades e de inclusão social, que permitiu tirar o nosso país do Mapa da Fome elaborado pela FAO, e atingirmos antecipadamente as Metas do Milênio de redução da pobreza e da pobreza extrema, definidas pela ONU. A redução da pobreza e das desigualdades no Brasil são amplamente reconhecidas internacionalmente.

4.2 Menos conhecida, mas não menos importante, foi a transformação educacional que passamos nos últimos anos, decorrente da universalização da educação básica. Apenas para dar um exemplo, em 1991, o Brasil possuía apenas 43 municípios com Índice de Desenvolvimento Humano, o IDH, médio, alto ou muito alto. Em 2010, 4166 municípios (74,8%) de nossas cidades estavam nestas faixas. Pois o fator mais importante para este salto foi a ampliação da cobertura de nosso sistema educacional, que explica 71% da evolução do IDHM no Brasil. Contudo, esse intenso processo de transformação, que estamos vivendo, não será sustentável e definitivo sem a garantia de acesso universal a uma educação de mais qualidade.

4.3 Isso porque a educação é o instrumento mais efetivo para a redução das desigualdades. É ela que empodera o cidadão para o exercício de seus direitos; que amplia as oportunidades de acesso ao emprego e à renda; que favorece os processos de inovação tecnológica; que amplia os ganhos de produtividade e competitividade; é a educação que é o principal instrumento para a construção de uma cultura de tolerância e paz – valores fundamentais da democracia.

4.4 Saliento que, com o fim do superciclo das commodities e outras mudanças que ocorrem na geoeconomia mundial, o Brasil terá de acelerar a transição para a sociedade do conhecimento e para a economia inovadora, com uma indústria internacionalmente competitiva. As vicissitudes criadas pela crise e pelo inevitável ajuste fiscal não devem nos desencorajar. Ao contrário, devem nos inspirar a fazer mais e melhor. As crises são momentos muito importantes e não podem ser desperdiçadas. Teremos que fazer mais com menos. Estamos convocados a ter mais gestão, mais criatividade, mais eficiência.

4.5 O fundamental já temos: a determinação em fazer, e um norte estratégico claramente definido, que é o Plano Nacional de Educação para a próxima década, que foi aprovado por unanimidade pelo Congresso, e sancionado pela presidenta Dilma, sem um único veto. Ele estabelece um conjunto de 20 metas audaciosas, cuja implantação exigirá engenho e arte dos gestores públicos e um amplo debate sobre o financiamento da educação brasileira. Esse conjunto de 20 metas percorre todo itinerário educacional brasileiro da creche à pós graduação, e busca enfrentar os principais desafios da educação brasileira, a qualidade da educação básica, a redução das desigualdades educacionais, a inclusão e universalização da educação infantil.

4.6 O PNE estabelece, em sua meta número 1, que, até o final de 2016, todas as crianças de 4 a 5 anos devem estar matriculadas na pré-escola. É na educação infantil que a criança recebe os estímulos necessários para que desenvolva as habilidades cognitivas e não cognitivas, tão necessárias ao seu processo de alfabetização, em especial os filhos e filhas de pais de baixa escolaridade. Hoje, temos 81,4% das crianças de 4-5 anos de idade na escola, e o nosso grande desafio é incluir especialmente as crianças mais pobres, da periferia das grandes cidades e das pequenas cidades do interior.

4.7 Em 2012, tive a honra de lançar o Pacto Nacional pela Alfabetização na Idade Certa, com foco na capacitação de professores e professoras alfabetizadores. Foram concedidas mais de 318 mil bolsas de capacitação para esses professores, e foram mobilizados 15,9 mil docentes universitários orientadores. Para avaliarmos a progressão de nossas crianças, criei a ANA, a Avaliação Nacional de Alfabetização Censitária.

4.8 Ao final do primeiro ciclo de avaliação, constatamos que o ritmo de avanço é insuficiente na leitura, escrita e matemática. E, novamente, o grande desafio está nas crianças oriundas das famílias de baixa renda e baixa escolaridade. Estamos buscando a convergência de um conjunto de programas: Escola Tempo Integral, Estágio nas Escolas Públicas dos Estudantes de Licenciatura e Pedagogia, e nossos outros programas de formação de professores, conduzidos pelo MEC. A articulação desse conjunto de iniciativas acreditamos que permitirá enfrentar esse grande desafio, e assegurar esse direito essencial que é o domínio da leitura, da escrita e da matemática no primeiro ciclo de formação.

4.9 A construção de uma Base Nacional Comum Curricular que estamos implementando também será fundamental para reorientar os cursos de pedagogia e formação de professores, além de favorecer as avaliações e respeitar a diversidade de experiências educacionais.

4.10 Contudo, além de melhorar a oferta de insumos educacionais na escola, por meio de professores capacitados e mais valorizados, infraestrutura, e currículos adequados, precisamos reforçar a gestão das escolas, pois é esta a “tecnologia” capaz de transformar insumos em educação de qualidade. Por isso o Ministério da Educação está desenvolvendo um programa nacional de formação e certificação de diretores, de forma a preparar e habilitar os profissionais da educação aos cargos de gestão da rede de escolas públicas.

4.11 Outro programa que merece destaque é o PRONATEC, Programa Nacional do Ensino Técnico e Profissionalizante, que já efetivou mais de 9 milhões de matrículas nos últimos três anos e meio. Gostaríamos de destacar que o Brasil tirou o primeiro lugar na World Skills, competição conhecida como a Olimpíada Mundial do Ensino Técnico Profissionalizante disputada por 69 países em 2015.

4.12 A sala de aula precisa ser atraente e um lugar interessante para essa geração nativa digital. Nós professores somos analógicos e o estado continua arcaico e cartorial. As tecnologias pedagógicas digitais avançam em todo mundo, permitem aulas mais criativas, participativas, individualizadas e motivadoras. Dentro desse espírito, estamos estruturando um programa nacional de estudos e preparação para o Exame Nacional do Ensino Médio. Este exame, o ENEM, foi realizado há dez dias, com a participação de cerca de 7 milhões de participantes, e representa a grande porta de acesso à educação superior em nosso país.

4.13 No processo de preparação do ENEM, nós vamos utilizar vídeo-aulas, por meio da TV Escola, uma TV pública do Ministério da Educação, com uma plataforma digital, com aulas de reforço e exercícios, que os estudantes participantes poderão acessar. Faremos avaliações simuladas mensais, que permitirão um relatório individualizado de desempenho do estudante, associado a um plano de estudos, bem como um relatório para sua escola, orientando as aulas de reforço e revisão.

4.14 O ENEM é o um ótimo exemplo da vontade do brasileiro por estudar, pois, a partir da nota nesse exame nacional, o estudante pode disputar uma vaga em qualquer curso de qualquer universidade pública federal. Nas nossas universidades, estabelecemos uma política de quotas, sendo metade das vagas para os estudantes das escolas públicas do ensino médio, com um recorte especial para os de baixa renda, afro descendentes e indígenas.

4.15 Além disso, os alunos tem direito a um programa de bolsas de estudos, o PROUNI, hoje com 1,7 milhões de bolsas de estudo concedidas, para acessar as universidades privadas. E, ainda, o FIES, um programa de financiamento subsidiado, que também contribuiu para a inclusão de mais de dois milhões de estudantes de baixa renda na educação superior.

4.16 No Ensino Superior, as Universidades Federais passaram por um intenso processo de expansão. Nos últimos 14 anos, foram construídos 173 novos campus e 18 novas Universidades federais, além da criação de 422 campus de Institutos Tecnológicos Federais. As matrículas no Ensino Superior como um todo cresceram mais de 170% no últimos 14 anos, em grande parte, estimuladas pelos programas do governo federal como o Prouni e Fies, que respondem por mais de 40% das matrículas da rede privada.

4.17 Tivemos, também, uma forte expansão nos cursos de pós-graduação. Hoje, temos 6443 cursos de mestrado e doutorado, que formam cerca de 95 mil doutores e 132 mil mestres por ano. Apesar do ajuste fiscal, o programa Ciência sem Fronteiras mantém, hoje, 35 mil estudantes brasileiros nas melhores Universidades do Mundo. Nossas Universidades precisam avançar no esforço de internacionalização. Para finalizar, gostaria de destacar que o Brasil investe, hoje, 6,2% do PIB em educação. E, no Governo da Presidenta Dilma, todos os royalties do petróleo e o Fundo Social do Pré Sal, nossa grande reserva estratégica, estão vinculados ao financiamento da educação.

4.18 Por tudo isso, é com convicção e determinação que já anunciei, aqui mesmo nesta plenária, no início desta semana, que o Brasil apoia e felicita o Marco de Ação da Educação 2030. Estamos totalmente envolvidos e empenhados em sua plena implantação. Precisamos compartilhar nossos esforços e conceber a educação e o conhecimento com um patrimônio comum de toda a humanidade. Este é um compromisso do Brasil. Muito obrigado.

## 5. **The President:**

Thank you very much, Your Excellency. Our next speaker is His Excellency, Mr Adil Osmanović, Minister of Civil Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Your Excellency, you have the floor.

### 6.1 **Mr Osmanović** (Bosnia and Herzegovina)

*(address delivered in Bosnian; English text provided by the delegation):*

Distinguished President, distinguished Director-General, your Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, please allow me to welcome you on behalf of the delegation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and to express my pleasure to be here at this 38th session of the General Conference of UNESCO. The role of UNESCO today, as we celebrate 70 years of its establishment, is even more significant, since the mission of UNESCO provides us with guidelines that through cooperation in the fields of education, science, communication and culture, we may build a better future.

6.2 UNESCO is an organization that is capable of providing answers to key global social challenges of the modern world, and in that sense we find that priorities should be set and activities defined. I want to express support to the proposed UNESCO programme for the next biennium, and to emphasize the commitment of Bosnia and Herzegovina for active cooperation with UNESCO, in order to realize these set goals.

6.3 In Bosnia and Herzegovina, a reform agenda has been adopted, and very significant reforms are ongoing in the areas which are within the mandate of UNESCO. Especially significant reforms are being implemented in the area of education with the aim of ensuring an equal approach to education for all, respecting diversity and preventing discrimination, and to develop a modern education system. Up until now experience has shown that education is very important to preserve peace and for the development of democratic societies, based on connection, experience exchange and dialogue at the local, national and international levels.

6.4 In the field of science, in accordance with strategic documents, we believe that finding solutions for issues of preserving environment, water and other natural resources are key goals. We believe that only through joint work and cooperation can we reach answers on global questions and challenges that only science can provide, so we support initiatives and project that contribute to this cause.

6.5 In sports, we are committed to cooperation, especially in areas which relate to the prevention of violence at sport facilities, and the prevention of doping. By investing in sports, we contribute to the development of society, and by the promotion of sport values, we promote peace, tolerance and human dignity.

6.6 Cultural diversity is one of the key elements of the traditional and cultural values of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Our first element of intangible cultural heritage, Zmijanč embroidery, has been entered on the World Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage, while this year we expect a positive answer related to Konjic woodcarving. I particularly want to note that Bosnia and Herzegovina is a candidate for membership in the World Heritage Committee, and I sincerely hope that we will get the necessary support and opportunity to contribute and share our experiences through participating in the work of this very important body.

6.7 That culture knows no borders, and that our cultural heritage connects us all, is reflected in the joint nominations together with Serbia, Croatia and Montenegro of Stećak medieval tombstones for inscription on the World Heritage List. This year we marked the 10th anniversary of the entry into force of the UNESCO Convention on the Protection and

Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, bearing in mind that the preservation and fostering of cultural diversity is a prerequisite of the existence of the basic human values of society and fundamental human rights

6.8 Once again, I wish to express the desire and readiness of Bosnia and Herzegovina to contribute further in realizing the goals and priorities of UNESCO in preserving peace, eradicating poverty, ensuring sustainable development, promoting intercultural dialogue and respecting cultural diversity. Thank you for attention!

7. **The President:**

Thank you very much, Your Excellency. Our next speaker is Her Excellency Ms Irene A. Dick, Minister of Education, Science and Culture of Curaçao

8.1 **Ms Dick (Curaçao):**

Mr President of the General Conference, Mr Chair of the Executive Board, Madam Director-General, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen. Please accept on behalf of the Government of Curaçao, Mr President, our congratulations on being elected to preside over the 38th session of the General Conference of UNESCO and we wish you sustained success in the year's proceedings. Congratulations also to Montserrat on becoming the 10th Associate Member of UNESCO. It seems like only yesterday we sought before you to share the challenges we face and the successes we have achieved during the past two years.

8.2 Mr President, as UNESCO celebrates its 70th anniversary, I am pleased to say that with the support of UNESCO, we have been able to make significant progress in the areas of education, the sciences, culture and also communication and information. We are, however, aware that we have not reached our goal, but this is an ongoing process and with the help and support of UNESCO we will achieve our goals.

8.3 Early childhood education has real priority for me since I assumed the responsibilities of Minister of Education, Science, Culture and Sports. We initiated a full-phase project of collecting data to be able to register, licence and accredit all childcare facilities of Curaçao. Two-thirds of the population from 0 to 4 years old are not registered at any known institution recognized by the Government. It is in this area that we have to start to work on the development of the child to guarantee that when they grow up they become responsible citizens. As a Caribbean small island developing State (SIDS), we are aware that we alone cannot achieve certain developments in our country. That is why we are communicating with the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) to join forces to work towards SIDS becoming a global priority for UNESCO. It is here where the role of UNESCO is very important to help us achieve this goal. We have to call attention again to developments taking place in our environment, especially climate change. UNESCO must continue to address the impacts of climate change on coastal cities from sea level change caused by this. In particular, for Caribbean sites, climate change is a vital occurrence and cannot be neglected. Curaçao firmly believes that there should be policies in place for disaster risk-reduction, for comprehensive school safety, and we are already working to achieve this.

8.4 Mr President, contrary to other regions, the Caribbean region faces challenges of young men falling out of the system and attention should be placed on this rather alarming development also taking place in Curacao. Technical and vocational education and training (TVET) has vital importance in helping youth to obtain the necessary skills to find employment, as 37% of our youth is unemployed, most which are young males. A week ago, on 30 October, Curaçao held its first and very successful TVET conference with specialized speakers invited from the Caribbean region. Curaçao is also working towards having its TVET profile entered into the global database. We also started the process of obtaining an International Centre for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (UNEVOC) status for our vocational schools.

8.5 Mr President, tangible and intangible cultural heritage are important factors in maintaining cultural diversity. Also in the face of growing globalization, cultural heritage is not a manifestation itself, but the wealth of knowledge and skills that is transmitted from generation to generation. The social and economic value of this transmission of knowledge is relevant for the population of our country and is constantly recreated by groups and communities in response to their surroundings, interaction with nature and their history. We must not only focus on the tangible and intangible heritage but also on natural heritage. We will be achieving this by incorporating educational materials and working with several societies through all the major programmes of UNESCO.

8.6 Mr President, I am pleased to inform you that UNESCO has renewed the Chair of the University of Curaçao for another four years and has also agreed to the name change to the UNESCO Chair on Sustainable Development of Caribbean Sites. We are working on the science, technology and innovation (STI) policy for our Ministry through the UNESCO Participation Programme and we recently held a workshop on open educational resources which was also very successful. This was facilitated by the programme adviser for communication-information of the Kingston cluster office.

8.7 Finally Mr President, as UNESCO celebrates its 70th anniversary this year, it is also Curaçao's third participation as an Associate Member. Curacao also looks back at five years of obtaining autonomous status within the Kingdom of Netherlands and continues to look to UNESCO for continued support. Congratulations on 70 years of UNESCO and we hope that UNESCO continues to play a vital role in working towards peace in the world through the implementation of its programmes. Thank you.

9. **The President:**

Thank you very much, Your Excellency. In actual fact I am impressed that you delivered your intervention not from a paper but from that lovely new gadget. I will in future be counting on your support as I nudge UNESCO towards running paperless meetings. I will know who to call upon. Thank you very much. Our next speaker is His Excellency Mr Giriraj Mani Pokharel, Minister of Education of Nepal. Your Excellency, you have the floor.

10.1 **Mr Pokharel (Nepal):**

Mr President, Madam Director-General, Excellencies, Honourable Ministers, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen. I express my sincere thanks to the Director-General, Ms Irina Bokova, for the excellent arrangement of the

38th session of the General Conference of UNESCO. I convey the best wishes of the Government and the people of Nepal for its success.

10.2 Nepal's new Constitution establishes State-provided free primary and secondary education as a fundamental right. It mandates progressive steps toward free higher education for all, and makes special provisions for women, Dalits, minorities, poor, and physically challenged citizens.

10.3 Mr President, Nepal has made a courageous constitutional commitment to education for all. But we do not begin from scratch. Net enrolment rates have increased and the gender ratio has equalized. The “Literate Nepal Mission”, UNESCO's capacity building for EFA programme, and Nepali teachers have all contributed to our campaign to end illiteracy. With UNESCO support, we have strengthened our education management information system. A comprehensive monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework is being developed. Our school sector development plan addresses Nepal's commitment to the Incheon Declaration and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). We have created a technical education and vocational training (TVET) stream within secondary education, and continue to enhance ICT.

10.4 UNESCO and external development partners have provided important support to the education sector. Our goal is unfettered access to quality public education. To this end, rights-based reorganization of the education sector under federalism is a priority. We aim to make progressive teaching methods the norm, make schools a safe haven for learning, and learning a lifelong endeavour. We look forward to continued collaboration in keeping with our national priorities.

10.5 I commend UNESCO for its capacity-building assistance to Member States and for its solidarity as Nepal rebuilds its earthquake-damaged world heritage sites. This year, a statue of Buddha has been installed here at UNESCO, a gift from Nepal, the birth place of Buddha, in appreciation of UNESCO's role in preserving cultural heritage and world peace. In the same spirit, I invite UNESCO to look into the educational benefits of the Buddha's Vipasyana method of preparing the mind for knowledge.

10.6 Mr President, despite remarkable achievements, Nepal still faces great challenges. Illiteracy persists. Poor children, especially girls, face barriers to education. Qualitative improvements are essential. Public investment in education reached 4.2% of gross domestic product (GDP) in 2014, an improvement but still too low. Foreign aid averages 22% of the total education budget, but declined this year to just 13%. Investment in basic education has met Millennium Development Goal (MDG) and EFA targets, but has resulted in underfunding of higher education.

10.7 Our public university system has undergone necessary expansion. However, resources are stretched too thin. In the for-profit sector, cost and quality control is necessary. We now have a constitutional mandate to address these matters. The creation of an open university is also in the final stages. Nepal faces severe consequences from global climate change. In energy, agriculture, transportation and industry, ecologically-sound, culturally-sensitive and sustainable solutions are needed. Curricular reform is required to meet these pressing national needs.

10.8 Mr President, I have discussed challenges shared by many nations. Our educational efforts in Nepal currently face two extraordinary challenges as well - one natural, one man-made. Earthquakes have destroyed over 8,000 educational facilities. One million children are earthquake-affected. We aim for school rebuilding to be completed within two years. Our people and the world rallied to create make-shift classrooms, but winter is descending upon the mountains and better temporary solutions are essential.

10.9 The second extraordinary challenge we face is the obstruction of our southern border. Schools bear the brunt. The future of our children is at stake. We trust that all UNESCO Member States stand with us in our post-disaster reconstruction efforts. Restoration of normal supplies, in accord with the rights of landlocked countries, will let us return to the serious business of implementing our constitutional commitments to education for all and child development. Finally, Mr President, I wish to state that the Government of the Federal Republic of Nepal is fully committed to implementation of the decisions mutually agreed upon in this important conference. Thank you for your attention.

#### 11. **The President:**

Thank you very much, Your Excellency. Our next speaker is His Excellency Mr Miguel Ángel Estrella, Ambassador, Permanent Delegate of Argentina to UNESCO. Your Excellency, you have the floor.

#### 12.1 **Sr. Estrella (Argentina):**

Señor Presidente de la Conferencia General, Señor Presidente del Consejo Ejecutivo, Señora Directora General, Excelencias, distinguidos Delegados. Permítanme en primer lugar felicitar al Sr. Stanley Mutumba Simataa por su elección como Presidente de esta Conferencia General. Quisiéramos asimismo asociarnos a la Declaración que será efectuada por el Grupo de los 77 y China. Señor Presidente, este septuagésimo aniversario de la UNESCO se inscribe en un momento particular de la historia de Naciones Unidas. La agenda de desarrollo para después de 2015 ha sido aprobada hace apenas un mes en Nueva York fijando las metas que la comunidad internacional se ha propuesto alcanzar de aquí a 2030. Tal como lo recordó la Directora General, esta agenda aparece en un momento turbulento en la escena internacional donde una crisis humanitaria sin precedentes supera todo récord de desplazados, y donde la pobreza y la exclusión parecen poner en riesgo el fundamento mismo de la vida en sociedad. En este contexto, reconocemos el papel fundamental de la UNESCO, en el acompañamiento de los Estados para lograr un mundo más justo, inclusivo, solidario, igualitario y en paz.

12.2. Señor Presidente, en esta tarea, la Argentina considera que el sector de Ciencias Sociales y Humanas, cumple una función de vital importancia. En las palabras de Ban Ki-moon “el desarrollo sólo será sostenible si es inclusivo”. La Argentina ha tomado conciencia de ello y ha aplicado, a lo largo de la última década, un modelo de desarrollo con inclusión, a través de políticas centradas en las personas, las familias y sus derechos que han subordinado el crecimiento económico al bienestar de nuestro pueblo. Así hemos podido alcanzar una tasa de desocupación de 7%, de 4,7% de pobreza y del 1,4% de indigencia, muy lejos de los niveles de comienzo de siglo. En estos logros ha sido

esencial la determinación de nuestro gobierno en posicionar a la política como herramienta fundamental para la transformación de las realidades. La UNESCO dispone en este sentido de un programa importantísimo, el MOST, que vincula investigación y políticas para promover transformaciones sociales positivas. Este programa dispone, tal como lo ha señalado el Consejo Ejecutivo en su última sesión, de herramientas únicas para acompañar a los Estados en la formulación de nuevas políticas públicas necesarias al alcance de los objetivos de desarrollo sostenible. Revalorizar este sector transversal a toda la Agenda 2030 debe ser una prioridad de la Organización.

12.3 Señor Presidente, en lo que a educación respecta, el rol de la UNESCO es primordial dado su liderazgo en el posicionamiento de ésta como motor principal del desarrollo. Con la aprobación del Marco de Acción Educación 2030, los Estados nos hemos comprometido con una agenda única y renovada, provista de guías concretas, que permitirá “garantizar una educación inclusiva, equitativa y de calidad y promover oportunidades de aprendizaje durante toda la vida para todos”. Una educación de calidad nos permite no sólo formar en contenidos sino contribuir al desarrollo pleno de la personalidad humana. Sólo así podremos reducir las desigualdades, la exclusión y favorecer la movilidad social. Los principios de gratuidad y obligatoriedad que aseguran la realización del derecho fundamental a la educación, han sido siempre prioridades para nuestro país. Durante la última década, hemos doblado la inversión pública educativa pasando del 3% al 6% del PIB. Señor Presidente, la ciencia es un factor vital para satisfacer toda una serie de necesidades básicas del ser humano y promover un desarrollo seguro y sostenible. Consciente de ello, la Argentina creó un Ministerio de Ciencia, Tecnología e Innovación Productiva que ha brindado financiamiento a proyectos productivos y científicos, ha hecho progresar el número de investigadores, invertido en infraestructura y apostado para la repatriación de científicos.

12.4 El desarrollo de un plan estratégico de ciencia ha permitido a investigadores argentinos realizar destacados descubrimientos que se han visto reconocidos internacionalmente. Justamente anteayer en el Foro Mundial de la Ciencia, el Dr. Diego Golombek recibió el Premio UNESCO-Kalinga de Divulgación Científica y los científicos Fabio Kalesnik, Horacio Sirolli y Luciano Iribarren el premio UNESCO-Sultán Qaboos para la preservación del medio ambiente. Señor Presidente, hoy más que nunca la Argentina reitera su firme condena a los actos de destrucción intencional del Patrimonio Mundial de la humanidad, su compromiso con la resolución 2199 del Consejo de Seguridad de las Naciones Unidas así como su apoyo.

### 13. **The President**

Our next speaker is His Excellency Mr Antony Blinken, Deputy Secretary of State of the United States of America. Your Excellency, you have the floor.

#### 14.1 **Mr Blinken** (United States of America):

Mr President of the General Conference, Madam Director-General, distinguished delegates, it is an honour to represent the United States at the 38th session of the General Conference during UNESCO’s 70th anniversary. I am grateful for the opportunity to affirm our candidacy for re-election to UNESCO’s Executive Board and to reiterate our nation’s belief in the undeniably important role that UNESCO plays in upholding our collective peace and security.

14.2 Seventy years ago, out of the rubble of war and the pain of unfathomable national loss, our predecessors made one of the wisest decisions in human history. With the gift of foresight and the courage of hope, they resisted the impulse to concentrate power in the hands of the victors. Instead, they built an international system of institutions, norms, and rules dedicated to peace, stability, and prosperity for every nation. They stood up a force of blue helmets to protect civilians. They created organizations to safeguard public health, defend human rights, and respond to humanitarian crises. And they founded UNESCO to preserve the common spirit of our humanity while cherishing its diversity of traditions, cultures, and faiths.

14.3 Taken together, these institutions have given life to a global order that provides still to this day the best and sometimes only means to prevent conflict, energize progress, and allow countries to resolve their differences diplomatically and peacefully. As an integral pillar of this order, UNESCO stands on the frontlines of some of our toughest challenges equipped with some of our most powerful weapons for a lasting impact of a quality education, the scepticism of a free press, the expertise of our cultural preservationists, and the latest tools to sustainably manage our precious resources.

14.4 Across all of these critical issues, the United States is deeply engaged as a leader and partner of UNESCO. We were very pleased to join many of you earlier this afternoon to elevate the role of education in preventing and countering violent extremism - a role that received ringing endorsement by more than 85 co-sponsors during the session of the Executive Board. I was also proud to highlight a new UNESCO and United States-led education initiative to equip students with the skills to embrace inclusion and resist violent extremism, and I encourage all UNESCO members to join this effort. Wherever our values are under greatest threat, we see UNESCO’s work making a difference – from preserving cultural heritage in Syria and Iraq to protecting the safety of journalists and the free flow of information to fighting for a quality education for all children.

14.5 We are honoured to be a partner in these initiatives. At the 197th session of the Executive Board last month, we were proud co-sponsors of several important resolutions, including highlighting UNESCO’s work to combat climate change in advance of the 21st session of the Conference of Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP 21) in Paris, advancing freedom of expression, supporting equal access to education, protecting cultural heritage in Ukraine and recommending the admission of Kosovo as a member of this Organization.

14.6 The Constitution of UNESCO is clear on this issue: there is an undeniable path for Kosovo membership in the Organization, a path which is not diverted and not blocked by United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244. This is not a question of recognition or non-recognition. Countries that do not recognize Kosovo have supported its membership in several United Nations specialized agencies, including the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Our co-sponsorship of the resolution conveys our strong belief that Kosovo should be welcomed by this General Conference as a full member.

14.7 As a founding member of UNESCO, we remain committed to its ideals and aspirations. As a candidate for the Executive Board, the United States renews that promise, reiterates our determination to restore full funding for the Organization, and pledges our continued, determined leadership. This is not just the policy of our nation. It is also a personal commitment, one that was passed down to me by my stepfather, the late Samuel Pizar, who was a UNESCO Honorary Ambassador and Special Envoy for Holocaust Education.

14.8 This morning, in fact, I had the opportunity to retrace my steps as a young boy here in Paris, when I returned to my school, Ecole Jeannine Manuel, a UNESCO Associated School. As I walked into my old classrooms, I reflected on the education I had been so blessed to receive. Alongside lessons in mathematics and science, literature and language, my classmates and I were taught, in the words of the founder of the school Jeannine Manuel, “de penser comme l’autre” – to see through the eyes of another. In doing so, we learned to respect our differences while recognizing all that we have in common, including our gifts of reason and wisdom, our expressions of art and culture, our universal values of civility, freedom, and dignity.

14.9 The goals we have set for ourselves – from fighting climate change to achieving universal access to education to fighting violent extremism – are only possible if we work together to utilize these shared gifts, so that our collective efforts to make the world a little bit healthier, a little bit wealthier, a little bit wiser are empowered by the talents of all of our citizens. This is the *raison d’être* not only of UNESCO but of all those who have high hopes and big dreams for the future. On behalf of Secretary of State John Kerry, it is my honour and privilege to reaffirm our position as a proud candidate for the Executive Board. I extend my sincere appreciation to this institution, its leadership, and its mission of peace. Thank you very much.

15. **The President:**

Thank you very much Your Excellency. Our next speaker is His Excellency Mr Andrej Slapničar, Ambassador, Permanent Delegate of the Republic of Slovenia to UNESCO. Your Excellency, you have the floor.

16.1 **Mr Slapničar (Slovenia):**

Madam Director-General, Mr President of the General Conference, Mr Chair of the Executive Board, ladies and gentlemen. It is a great honour to address the General Conference of UNESCO in the year that the Organization celebrates its 70th anniversary. Slovenia fully associates itself with the statements made on behalf of the European Union. Slovenia, as a strong supporter of UNESCO will work, if elected to the Executive Board next week, towards an Organization focused on global challenges and results-based budgeting. UNESCO is the house of peace-building and we need to look for consensus on issues that have important consequences for us all, such as freedom of expression, promotion of cultural diversity, investment of opportunities for women and girls to ensure that they are fully involved in our societies, education on human rights, cooperation in science, and protection of the world’s cultural heritage.

16.2 UNESCO needs further reforms and the Organization needs to return to its basic mandate. We should all make an effort towards a more limited number of priorities. One of those priorities is certainly education, which must remain at the forefront in the post-2030 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The education for all (EFA) programme is still a long way off. According to the latest data, 24 million children will never enter a classroom. Girls are the most disadvantaged, where in some parts of the world 80% of girls are unlikely to start school. Those are the facts that we cannot ignore. Therefore, UNESCO’s education for all agenda should be based on quality, equity and inclusion under a refined EFA structure.

16.3 Mr President, Slovenia is currently helping tens of thousands of refugees that are crossing the region, fleeing from war-torn countries. Among the refugees are many children and young people who are deprived of proper education and would need to be included into our schooling system as well as to be integrated into our societies. Education is a human right and we would like to stress the importance of education for children who are forced to leave their toys and schoolbooks behind. More efforts should be made to bring these children to safety and back to schools.

16.4 We are pleased that UNESCO has endorsed a new strategy on youth. Youth must be empowered through inclusion, schooling and job creation. In 2012, the Slovenian National Commission for UNESCO started a very successful programme by establishing a UNESCO youth platform which brings together young people from all over Slovenia who actively participate in a range of different activities.

16.5 Ladies and gentlemen, human rights matter. Despite efforts to uproot all forms of racism, intolerance has increased, even more so during the refugee crisis. Human rights apply equally online and offline and hate speech online is no more acceptable than it is in traditional media. Therefore, Slovenia calls on UNESCO to work for global and human rights education, the most important pillars of the culture for peace problem. Slovenia as a member of an informal group, Platform for Human Rights Education and Training, and as a newly-elected member of the United Nations Human Rights Council in Geneva, is an active advocate of human rights education. Our goal is to help develop a human rights culture that enables each person to know their own rights and obligations towards others. New information technologies have brought so many advantages - one of them is open access to knowledge. Slovenia is striving towards a knowledge-based society and improving multimedia literacy through a virtual platform, “VideoLectures.Net”, run by the Slovenian Jožef Stefan Institute in Ljubljana.

16.6 Let me come to another important item - UNESCO’s global leadership in protecting cultural heritage worldwide, especially in the case of armed conflicts. We welcome the proposal to send in United Nations peacekeepers to protect heritage sites around the world from various threats. Distinguished Director-General, let me conclude by saying that Slovenia is also looking forward to working together on a reformed agenda. We commend you for navigating the Organization through the last few years. We compliment your efforts to fully engage National Commissions to promote UNESCO’s mission and future tasks as we see them; to protect what is vulnerable, to protect cooperation in science, to tackle climate change and to promote human rights. Thank you.

*Mr Karam (Lebanon) takes the Chair.*

**17. Le Président:**

Merci, Excellence. Le prochain orateur, c'est Son Excellence M. Fauoa Maani, Ministre de l'éducation, de la jeunesse et des sports de Tuvalu. Vous avez la parole.

**18.1 Mr Maani (Tuvalu):**

Mr President, Madam Director-General, Excellencies, ladies and gentleman, It has always been an honour for me to participate in the General Conference of UNESCO. Let me first congratulate the Organization on its 70th anniversary and you, Mr President, on your election to this very important post. I wish you every success in your new role. May I also take this opportunity to express my deep appreciation to the outgoing President, His Excellency Mr Hao Ping, working together with the Director-General, Ms Irina Bokova, for their unrelenting efforts to reform UNESCO towards the noble causes of peace and shared prosperity.

18.2 Mr President, on behalf of the Government of Tuvalu, I would like to reiterate the importance that Tuvalu accords to its partnership with UNESCO. Indeed, our national development plan, TK2, recognizes the effect of climate change, youth developments, inclusive education in all its diverse forms, the development of the ICT sectors and the promotion of a world class culture, for the attainment of the ultimate goal of developed-country status.

18.3 Tuvalu continues to strive toward achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) as well as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) reflected in Goal 13 that was announced at the United Nations in New York last September. The Pacific World Heritage Action Plan (2010-2015) aims to "increase in-country capacity at all levels, inclusive of indigenous people to develop best practices, management plans and arrangements to ensure effective protection of Pacific heritage sites, in a way that takes into account and recognizes traditional knowledge and conservation practices for land, air and seas". Within this action plan, Tuvalu had identified the following two actions as priority: one to create world heritage awareness and education materials for communities, and two, to hold training workshops in world heritage for governmental agencies involved in cultural and natural heritage.

18.4 Mr President, as a least developed country (LDC) and one of the small island developing States (SIDS), Tuvalu is fully aware of its responsibilities under 2030 Agenda, just as we did with the MDGs. We are planning to host a national summit to develop our next development plan (TK3) in the middle of this month. Our national priorities along with our framework for Pacific regionalism will be aligned to the interregional agenda of the SIDS-SAMOA Pathway and mainstreamed to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

18.5 At the outset, sea-level rise is certainly a familiar topic among the 10,000 inhabitants of Tuvalu, a string of nine low-lying atolls and reef islands in the central Pacific Ocean. Early in March this year, tropical cyclone Pam devastated Tuvalu. Given its low elevation and small size, the devastation was significant and cross-sectoral. This confirms our vulnerability to the increasing occurrences and severity of natural disasters. On that note, Tuvalu welcomes external assistance to address the adverse aftermaths of tropical cyclone Pam.

18.6 In conclusion, Tuvalu reaffirms its commitment to working with UNESCO at subregional, regional and international levels to achieve the goals of the Organization and contribute to sustainable development through supporting SIDS resilience in the face of environmental degradation and change, including climate change, and impact on oceans, freshwater, biodiversity and natural resources by drawing upon the strengths of the intergovernmental scientific programmes (International Hydrological Programme (IHP), International Geoscience Programme (IGCP), Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC), Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Programme, and Management of Social Transformations (MOST) programme) and building synergies between scientific and indigenous knowledge. Mr President, thank you for this opportunity.

**19. Le Président :**

Merci, Excellence. Je pense qu'on va être à court de chocolats, là. Le prochain orateur, c'est Son Excellence M. Jerome Fitzgerald, Ministre de l'éducation, des sciences et technologie des Bahamas. À vous la parole.

**20.1 Mr Fitzgerald (Bahamas):**

Mr President, Madam Director-General, colleague Ministers, representatives of the various delegations, distinguished ladies and gentlemen, good afternoon. It is truly an esteemed honour and privilege to address this 38th session of the General Conference of UNESCO on behalf of the government of the Commonwealth of the Bahamas as Minister of Education, Science and Technology. The Bahamas stands at the crossroads of the Americas and Europe ready to embrace the opportunities that await our archipelagic nation. Like most civilizations, ours is rich in culture and history and through the years our people have been liberated, educated and celebrated.

20.2 UNESCO continues to be a pivotal participant in the realization of many aspirations, both individually and collectively. It provides a platform for the advancement of educational, scientific and cultural pursuits and to harness the power of education, science and culture to empower the citizens of the world. Specifically, UNESCO has helped the citizens of The Bahamas to think outside the realm of normalcy and to venture into areas infrequently travelled, highlighting the collective strength of a united people. We commit our unwavering support in all peace-centred initiatives. We must continue to be relentless in our peace-seeking initiatives and we must use peace not just as an antidote of war but as a means of spreading universal love.

20.3 This 38th session of the General Conference takes place at an important juncture in global events. The world over has adopted the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and while the focus remains aligned with the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), we have entered the next phase. Now, 15 years after the Millennium Development Goals, the world has experienced the evolution and revolution of a myriad of ideas and while there are still many uncertainties, one thing is certain - the need for global policies to preserve the world of and for future generations.

20.4 As Minister of Education, I wholeheartedly believe that education is the nucleus of the Sustainable Development Goals. While Sustainable Development Goal 4 is to "ensure inclusive and quality education for all and promote lifelong learning", I believe that the success of all other SDGs hinges on our ability to educate and inform the people of the world



of the impact and effects of not taking proactive measures to sustain our communities, colonies, countries, and by extension, the world. By 2030, there are some ambitious goals that we hope to accomplish, and I am optimistic that with the political will and by properly informing and having optimal participation by our respective citizens, we can successfully achieve these goals.

20.5 The Bahamas recognizes the role of education in sustaining its people, environment, natural resources and economy. This year, the government of the Bahamas had the privilege of hosting the 19th Conference of Commonwealth Education Ministers and based on the Nassau Declaration there is now renewed focus on the importance of education to the success and longevity of all of our countries.

20.6 The UNESCO Office in the Bahamas has had the opportunity to advance the objectives of UNESCO through a number of strategic initiatives since the last session of the General Conference in 2013. In keeping with the mandate of UNESCO, the following were realized: Nassau was designated as a UNESCO Creative City in arts and crafts; our country became party to three culture conventions; and we are in the process of recommending several potential sites to be considered as world heritage sites. Additionally, we have hosted a number of events, namely a regional conference on the 2001 Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage; a science, technology and innovation (STI) workshop which brought together local governmental and non-governmental stakeholders with a view to developing a comprehensive policy and programme for science and technology for the entire Bahamas, in which UNESCO sponsored the various presenters and speakers.

20.7 Ladies and gentlemen, we must remain resolute in our commitment to ensuring that holistic policies are developed and enacted that will address issues of global importance. We must be united on educational and social and environmental issues. Education must remain paramount to the sustainability of the initiatives and outputs deemed necessary and important to the continued development of the world and its people. We have a unique opportunity to change the trajectory of millions of children through education. We must find ways to convey to every boy and girl, the power of education to transform their lives. We must make education relevant and appealing and we must be creative and innovative in our approach. Hope must no longer be on the horizon, for the horizon seems unreachable. Hope must be at the shoreline – a footstep away and within our grasp. We must ignite the passion that flickers in the hearts and minds of humanity. The future is now.

20.8 We unequivocally give our support to the continued empowerment of UNESCO to “build peace in the minds of men and women” in order that the world again may achieve solidarity and unity in its pursuit for a happier, healthier, safer world. Together we can empower, educate and enlighten humanity for the greater good. Thank you very much!

21. **Le Président:**

Merci, Excellence. L'orateur suivant, c'est Son Excellence M. Luis Jaime Saavedra Chanduvi, Vice-Ministre de l'éducation du Pérou. À vous la parole.

22.1 **Sr. Saavedra Chanduvi (Perú)**

Muchas gracias señor Presidente. Es un honor presentarme ante esta Asamblea en representación del Gobierno de Perú. Deseo felicitarlo por su elección y al pueblo de Namibia por acoger próximamente la 10ª sesión del Comité para la Salvaguarda del Patrimonio Cultural Inmaterial. Hace solo tres o cuatro años, había una imagen de crisis en la UNESCO. Hoy, gracias a la conducción de la Directora General, Irina Bokova, la UNESCO se ha sobrepuesto al ajuste financiero y ocupa un lugar de vanguardia en las más importantes iniciativas internacionales vinculadas a las nuevas metas del desarrollo sostenible, a la nueva estrategia de la educación hacia el año 2030 y a la introducción de la cultura como una variable central del desarrollo sostenible.

22.2 El Perú viene participando activamente en todas estas iniciativas. Ha sido sede y ha contribuido a un excelente resultado de la COP20 y ve con mucho optimismo la reunión en París de la COP21. Por otro lado, Perú tendrá el honor de recibir en marzo del próximo año el 4º Congreso Mundial de Reservas de Biosfera que nos permitirá aprobar un nuevo plan de acción para la próxima década. La importancia de la educación como elemento central del proceso de desarrollo ha estado siempre en el debate político. Y ciertamente, la inversión en educación en todos los países en desarrollo se ha incrementado, como lo muestran los aumentos en la tasas de asistencia escolar. Pero todavía hay retos de aumentar las tasas de escolaridad en la secundaria y en la educación inicial, y retos de incrementar la calidad en todos los niveles educativos. Retos que no son grandes, sino inmensos. El Perú está comprometido con el marco de acción para aplicar la estrategia de educación 2030 discutida en Incheon, Corea del Sur, y aprobada hace unos días aquí en París. El Perú está comprometido con pasar de las promesas a las acciones. Nuestro país reconoce, que, siendo un país de renta media, el nivel de su sistema educativo está lejos de donde debería de estar. Una educación pública gratuita de alta calidad, para todos es el mecanismo más eficaz para lograr una sociedad justa, en donde todos los ciudadanos tengan las oportunidades de desarrollar sus talentos y potencialidades al máximo. En el Perú, lamentablemente, todavía el lugar de nacimiento o el nivel socioeconómico de la familia tienen un impacto en las oportunidades educativas. Eso está cambiando, a través de inversiones significativas que priorizan las zonas rurales y programas masivos de becas para estudios universitarios y técnicos para jóvenes más pobres. Pero todavía el camino es largo.

22.3 El Perú se ha comprometido a implementar una reforma educativa integral. Trabajamos simultáneamente en cuatro líneas de acción: Primero, un proceso de revalorización de la carrera docente, que apunta a duplicar los salarios en siete años y consolidar una carrera meritocrática y con oportunidades de desarrollo profesional para todos nuestros maestros. Segundo, un aumento en la calidad de aprendizajes a través de un conjunto de intervenciones pedagógicas, como por ejemplo una educación secundaria de jornada completa. Tercero, una modernización de la gestión del sistema escolar, incluyendo una gestión más eficaz de las escuelas, con directores con mayor capacidad de decisión y margen de acción, y cuarto, un aumento significativo en la inversión en infraestructura educativa. Es indispensable avanzar de manera simultánea en todas estas líneas de acción, sólo así podemos tener una reforma educativa integral. Y para poder avanzar se requiere un mayor presupuesto. En los últimos cinco años el presupuesto destinado a educación se ha incrementado en 90%. Esto nos ha permitido incrementar la inversión en educación como porcentaje del PBI de 3 a

casi 4%. Hemos avanzado pero es todavía absolutamente insuficiente, ya que todavía el gasto por alumno en la educación básica es de sólo 1.100 dólares. El esfuerzo fiscal necesario es muy grande y requiere el compromiso de toda la sociedad. Falta muchísimo por hacer. La educación debe ser, tiene que ser una política de Estado. La reforma educativa y el incremento de la inversión destinada a la educación deben mantenerse de manera agresiva, tenaz y persistente a lo largo de los distintos gobiernos y por los próximos años.

22.4 El rol de la UNESCO en esta tarea es fundamental. En Perú hemos encontrado un nuevo *modus operandi* que nos permite el apoyo de la UNESCO en la gestión de actividades y proyectos utilizando recursos del gobierno nacional. Esto nos permite implementar inversiones de manera más rápida y efectiva así como contar con la asistencia técnica de la UNESCO. Estas innovaciones, así como el trabajo de esta institución para acompañar las acciones de todos los países miembros, serán fundamentales para avanzar en el compromiso que tenemos con nuestros niños, niñas y jóvenes de darles una educación de calidad. ¿Una educación de calidad? Es una deuda que tenemos con nuestros estudiantes, es nuestro deber de seguir trabajando de manera incansable, para darles a ellos la educación que se merecen, para que todos nuestros ciudadanos tengan la oportunidad de desarrollar su potencial lo máximo, es nuestra responsabilidad y a eso estamos abocados. Muchas gracias.

23. **Le Président :**

Merci, Excellence. La parole maintenant est à Son Excellence Docteur Minkailu Bah, Ministre de l'éducation, science et technologie du Sierra Leone.

24.1 **Mr Bah (Sierra Leone):**

Mr President of the General Conference, Madam Director-General of UNESCO, Excellencies, Ambassadors and heads of diplomatic missions, directors and heads of UNESCO sectors and cluster offices, distinguished delegates. Let me start my presentation by congratulating UNESCO on behalf of the Government of Sierra Leone for yet another General Conference. I wish to express our sincere appreciation of the collaboration between UNESCO and the Government and people of Sierra Leone especially during our current period of post-Ebola recovery and transition.

24.2 Mr President, as you may be aware, the Ebola virus disease ravaged the three Mano River Union countries, including my country, Sierra Leone. The epidemic devastated all areas of economic and social development. Before the outbreak of the Ebola epidemic, Sierra Leone was rated among the fastest growing economies in the world, but our gains have been reversed significantly. I am, however, consoled by the belief that Sierra Leoneans are resilient people and without doubt, we will rise above the challenges holding us down presently to a height never previously achieved. To achieve this ambition, we will obviously need the continued support of UNESCO.

24.3 Mr President, I am saddened to report that we lost over 200 medical personnel including doctors, nurses, laboratory technicians, pharmacists and other paramedics to Ebola. Additionally, thousands of children in my country have become orphans. We are, however, encouraged by the fact that throughout our trying times UNESCO, and fellow African and other countries rendered help to our country in the form of medical personnel, medication and equipment to end the tragedy.

24.4 Mr President, distinguished delegates, I wish to inform you that the three countries of the Mano River Union have embarked on a massive post-Ebola recovery programme and will therefore welcome assistance in all the areas that have been tremendously hit, especially education and health.

24.5 Mr President, through the support of UNESCO and other international partners Sierra Leone continues, even in the face of Ebola, to make significant progress in a number of areas in education. School level enrolment continues to surge. Although we do not have all children of primary school age in school, enrolment at the primary level exceeds the number of 6- to 11-year-olds in the country. Enrolment at the secondary level is now increasing at a faster rate than at the primary level. Our challenge now is not just a matter of constructing more secondary schools but also ensuring that we have enough teachers that have the capacity to teach at all levels. Gender parity in enrolment has been achieved at the primary level and noteworthy progress has been made at the secondary level. In fact, in the majority of local council areas there are now more girls than boys in primary schools.

24.6 Mr President, technical and vocational education and training (TVET) continues to be at the heart of plans for the education of our youth. My delegation regards UNESCO as a partner who can support Africa to successfully implement the TVET strategy that was adopted by the African Union. Effective and successful implementation of this strategy would result in practical skills transferred to our youth. In this regard, with the support of UNESCO we have developed a TVET policy. We now anxiously look forward to action on the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) UNESCO signed in October 2009 with the Government of Sierra Leone.

24.7 I wish to state at this point that all interventions detailed in our post-Ebola strategy document and recovery plan have their origin in our education sector plan (ESP) for 2014–2018 and our poverty reduction strategy paper III (PRSP III), "The Agenda for Prosperity 2013–2018". Our ESP has three goals: Goal 1 is to improve access, equity, and completion; Goal 2 is to improve the quality and relevance of education; and Goal 3 is to strengthen education service delivery.

24.8 Mr President, culture and tourism come in for much attention in our PRSP III. Our tourism potential is undeniable – we have beautiful beaches, many historical sites and relics as well as lush animal rich mountain forests in the north of the country and great fishing spots. The Ebola epidemic has dulled our tourism potential a little but we are at the point of developing a re-branding package that we hope will help with our image in the world and change perceptions. In this regard, we look forward to action being taken on the elements of cultural, historical and tourism support detailed in the October 2009 MoU that UNESCO signed with the Government of Sierra Leone.

24.9 In the information and communication sectors the Government has encouraged the growth of a free press and there are several private radio, print and television outfits all over the country. The Government is poised to design a

long-term programme on information and communication in Sierra Leone, with a focus on developing a national communications strategy; training of journalists and capacity-building of media practitioners.

24.10 Mr President, there are a lot more development issues and constraints relative to the field of UNESCO's competence. The simple message of this short presentation is to inform this distinguished body that Sierra Leone needs strong collaboration in order to fully implement its post-Ebola recovery and transition programme. We need your support, and the time is now! Thank you very much.

25. **The President:**

Thank you Your Excellency. Our next speaker is His Excellency Mr Simon Stiell, Minister of State of Education and Human Resource Development of Grenada. You have the floor.

26.1 **Mr Stiell** (Grenada):

Mr President of the 38th session of the General Conference, Mr Chair of the Executive Board, Madam Director-General, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen. Mr President, allow me to congratulate you upon your election as President of the 38th session of the General Conference and wish you every success during your presidency.

26.2 As a fellow OECS member I would like to start by welcoming the admission, by the General Conference, of Montserrat as an Associated Member of UNESCO on 3 November 2015. Mr President, today we are gathered here to consider how UNESCO's action could create, develop and promote the pathways to lasting peace and sustainable development. We welcome the adoption of the Education 2030 Framework for Action: Towards inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning for all.

26.3 Grenada recognizes the importance of education, not only as a human right, but also as a prerequisite and a driver for its long term sustainable development, in particular, to face the mountainous challenges faced by climate change adaptation, and the need for economic transformation.

26.4 Grenada is committed to providing meaningful education and training opportunities for its people. This starts with ensuring access to school for all children and extends to the promotion of quality, lifelong learning opportunities for all, including quality technical and vocational education and training (TVET), higher education, and research to meet the demands of the twenty-first century.

26.5 In this era of globalization, the world cannot genuinely prosper with inequalities between regions. Priority should continue to be given to Africa, but special attention should also be given to the needs of priority groups of countries, such as the least developed countries (LDCs) and small island developing States (SIDS). This is absolutely necessary to allow them to address the unique conditions that render them disadvantaged.

26.6 Likewise, a global society cannot maximize its true potential with inequality among its members. Hence, attention must be paid to gender equality, as a fundamental pillar for social development. Advocating for gender equality also requires that specific attention be given to the needs and contributions of our young males in our Caribbean societies, where a disproportionate number of males are confronted by underachievement, poverty, violence, and exclusion.

26.7 The global environmental and ecological crisis manifested in climate change, biodiversity loss, oceanic over-exploitation and degradation, desertification, fresh-water shortages and rising sea levels highlights the need for a new approach to the management of our resources. As island States, the role of the oceans is of strategic importance to us. An integrated management approach of our oceans, and a strengthened global ocean governance framework, are prerequisites for the sustainable use of these valuable resources. Building on this, the continued support from UNESCO for the implementation of early warning systems for tsunamis and other marine hazards, is of great importance to small island States, as of those of the Caribbean. We therefore urge greater focus on the mobilization of the necessary funds to complete this important programme in all regions, and in particular the Caribbean.

26.8 Culture can be a mainspring for the sustainable development of people, communities and our nations. We therefore applaud UNESCO for the importance it has placed on the protection, safeguard and the promotion of cultural tangible and intangible heritage, in particular the Organization's mandate through its normative action, and the implementation of all its cultural conventions.

26.9 Mr President, the extreme vulnerability and low resilience of small island developing States are recognized by UNESCO – the SIDS Action Plan outlines many of the steps to build resilience capacity. What is missing are the necessary resources to implement the plan. Greater focus is therefore required to identify and allocate those resources in the UNESCO Programme and Budget for 2016-2017 (38 C/5) and in the preparation of the Programme and Budget for 2018-2020 (39 C/5).

26.10 Mr President, in conclusion, as UNESCO celebrates its 70th anniversary, it gives both the Organization and us, its members, the opportunity: to reflect on the past, to look at the present and to take on board the many lessons learnt, as we chart the course for the future. Together we can make a difference. I thank you.

27. **Le Président :**

Merci, Excellence. La parole maintenant est à Son Excellence. Mme Khatuna Totladze, Vice-Ministre des affaires étrangères de Géorgie.

28.1 **Ms Totladze** (Georgia):

Mr President of the General Conference, Madam Director-General, distinguished delegates to UNESCO. It is my honour to address you today from this high tribune and to highlight UNESCO's achievements in building peace and sustainable development. UNESCO's founding principles are more than relevant today, but the challenges that we are facing need even more ambitious steps for implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which strongly emphasizes the role of culture, education, and women's empowerment.

28.2 Distinguished delegates, we share the vision that each country has its own approaches, visions and tools according to their national circumstances to attain the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). At the same time, it is more than obvious that we can effectively move forward only through close international collaboration and enhancing global and regional partnerships.

28.3 In this regard, let me stress the historical importance of the Silk Road that throughout centuries played a crucial role not only in the economic development of the countries involved, but also had a great impact in establishing cultural exchanges and intercultural dialogue. We therefore welcome the creation of the UNESCO Silk Roads online platform that will be great opportunity for a global audience to know more about the diversity of cultures and peoples along these routes. The Silk Road Forum, held in Georgia in 2015 on the initiative and high patronage of the Prime Minister, was a brilliant opportunity to launch new international initiatives which have the potential to become a resource for development and sustainability that determines the well-being of the people.

28.4 Empowering women and promoting gender equality is one of the goals of the 2030 Agenda. Georgia is particularly committed to this very issue. 2015 has been declared as the Year of Women by the President of Georgia. Furthermore, in two days' time, an international high-level conference "Achieving Gender Equality - Challenges and Opportunities in the European Neighbourhood", organized in cooperation with the European Union and the United Nations, will start in the capital of Georgia. The conference will adopt the Tbilisi Declaration with explicit commitment towards the advancement of gender equality and women's rights as an integral part of sustainable development.

28.5 We deeply believe that education really empowers people, promotes democracy and development. Education can play a crucial role in overcoming violent extremism, the main challenge the global community is facing today. Georgia's Government sees culture as a driving force for social cohesion and economic prosperity. I am confident that the UNESCO 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions is a key instrument for developing policies in support of culture. Effective implementation of the Convention is particularly important for us, *inter alia*, due to the fact that, according to the European Union-Georgia association agreement, the Diversity Convention creates the main framework of cooperation in the sphere of culture between Georgia and the European Union.

28.6 UNESCO's cultural conventions provide a unique platform, not only for safeguarding the tangible and intangible heritage of humanity, but also for intercultural dialogue and cooperation. Georgia has achieved impressive progress in the implementation of the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage at a national level. We hope that the Intangible Cultural Heritage List will be further enriched by the new Georgian nominations. The Georgian Government has fostered its collaboration with the World Heritage Centre and intensified its efforts to meet all the recommendations of the World Heritage Committee.

28.7 Distinguished delegates, we firmly condemn the recent barbaric acts of destruction of cultural heritage sites and welcome the new strategy for the protection of culture and the promotion of cultural pluralism in the event of armed conflict. This issue is of utmost importance to my country, as the Georgian Government is deprived of the possibility to preserve the cultural heritage monuments located in Georgia's occupied territories. This situation underlines the urgent need to dispatch a UNESCO expert mission for the purpose of evaluation of the condition of monuments in the occupied territories and prevention of their further destruction. Convinced of the need to further strengthen international efforts for protection of cultural properties, Georgia reconfirms its strong commitment to the principles of the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict and, as a member of the Committee expresses its readiness to contribute to relevant multilateral cooperation.

28.8 Ladies and Gentlemen, let me conclude by congratulating all of you on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of UNESCO. Let me assure you that the Georgian Government will spare no effort to further promote the values upon which the Organization was created. Thank you very much for your attention.

29. **Le Président :**

Merci, Excellence. Notre orateur maintenant, c'est Son Excellence M. Pham Cong Tac, Vice-Ministre des sciences et technologies du Viet Nam.

30.1 **Mr Tac** (Viet Nam):

Mr President, Madam Director-General of UNESCO, ladies and gentlemen. First of all allow me, on behalf of the Vietnamese Delegation to extend warm congratulations to the President of General Conference. Mr President, this Conference takes place as a special time when the United Nations has adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development last September, putting forward a new vision and reflecting mankind's common desire to live in a peaceful, safe, equal, green and clean world. The 2030 Agenda also lays down a new framework and orientation for countries to respond to common economic, social and environmental challenges. Through 70 years of development, UNESCO has gained many successes. Viet Nam commends UNESCO on its recent efforts to accomplish its noble mission to contribute to the building of peace, poverty reduction, sustainable development and intercultural dialogue. This month, we are preparing for the celebration for the 70 years anniversary of UNESCO;

30.2 We support UNESCO's priority goal of gender equality and acknowledges the effort made by UNESCO's Director-General in promoting gender equality and education for girls. We are drawing on all resources available to raise people's awareness of gender equality, eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls and promote education programmes and initiatives for women. In this endeavour, we have set up a focal point on gender equality under the Vietnamese National Commission for UNESCO.

30.3 Education for sustainable development has always been one of UNESCO's main goals. We believe that it is essential to enhance cooperation among teachers, parents, communities and public-private partnerships together with mass media in order to promote education and increase responsibility and the role of all in society. Viet Nam has gained many successes in comprehensive education reform. Viet Nam supports the global partnership for education and

cooperation with UNESCO can be seen as a vivid example of South-South cooperation in enhancing the quality of education through innovative teaching and learning methods. As a candidate to the Executive Board of UNESCO for the term 2015-2019, Viet Nam wishes to contribute to the formulation and implementation of long-term and short-term policy in the field of competences of UNESCO. Thank you in advance for your support on this election.

30.4 Ladies and gentlemen, we are ready to work with other UNESCO members to preserve and promote the value of culture, nature, habitats and cultural diversity. We support the “#Unite4Heritage” initiative launched by UNESCO. Ladies and gentlemen, we would like to thank members of the Executive Board of UNESCO for adopting the resolution to establish an International Centre of Mathematics and Physics in Viet Nam as a category 2 centre under the auspices of UNESCO. This is first time that we have proposed the enlistment of a category 2 centre in our country. We are all aware of the importance of biosphere reserves. We look forward to UNESCO’s continued support in the activity of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves and promoting the initiative on green growth and local biosphere reserves.

30.5 In the field of information and communication, we try to ensure that no one is left behind today in this interconnected world. We know that increasing cooperation between policy-makers and scientists in social management becomes more important than ever before. We have established a sub-committee on management and social transformation to deal with relevant matters in social management. Finally, we always support UNESCO’s endeavours to contribute to world peace and development. Thank you very much

31. **The President:**

Thank you Your Excellency. Our next speaker is Her Excellency Ms Delma Nedd, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Education of Guyana.

32.1 **Ms Nedd (Guyana):**

Mr President of the General Conference, Mr Chair of the Executive Board, Madam Director-General, Excellencies, delegates, ladies and gentlemen. The Senior Ministers of Education, Dr Rupert Roopnaraine, sends his greetings and congratulations to you, Mr President, on your election as President of the 38th session of the General Conference of UNESCO.

32.2 Some 70 years ago, the United Nations was founded in the aftermath of a world torn apart by great and terrible conflict. This agency, UNESCO, was a central part of that fundamental infrastructure with the specific mission to foster peace through collaboration and cohesion via the vehicles of education, science and culture. Within that mandate, was the wisdom of critical relevance which endures to this day.

32.3 Twenty years after the creation of this august Organization, Guyana, a young country was born. As a former plantation colony, we were faced with structural inequity, injustice and impoverishment, yet today we are the embodiment of the truest form of innovation that exists, that which underlies the survival of a reasonably cohesive society and the endurance of human spirit. While we are a young country in the reckoning of the world, we are rich with the experience of avoidance of devastating division, as well as rich with the potential of lasting social cohesion, within a milieu of contrasting ethnic and religious communities.

32.4 As is true of the United Nations, Guyana, as a country has often fallen short of its founding ideals of compromise, cohesion and conciliation. Nonetheless, its new administration has taken a giant step towards realizing those ideals, although it is merely a single step in a long journey forward. Next year, as Guyana celebrates the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its independence, running through all the grand plans will be three central themes: reflection, celebration, and preparation.

32.5 Our national anthem exhorts us to strive to be more worthy our heritage, this land of six peoples, thrown together by history, from Asia, Africa, Europe and the indigenous civilizations of the Americas. Over the next year, we will reflect on the richness of this heritage and of our land itself – from Pakaraima’s peaks to Corentyne’s lush sands – and seek to establish ways and means to protect and preserve our heritage.

32.6 Mr President, even as we reflect and celebrate, we are preparing our society for all the challenges and opportunities that exist ahead. Under the stewardship of His Excellency David Granger, President of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana, our Government will seek to address educational issues via a holistic approach, thereby embarking on an integrated curriculum reform from the learning environment to pedagogy. Our ultimate goal is an education system that is culturally relevant, technologically sustainable, and contextually adaptive, all with a central aspiration towards creativity and innovation.

32.7 Mr President, over the years, UNESCO has been a strong and reliable partner in education, culture and science. To this end, the Government of Guyana is appreciative of the opportunity afforded by UNESCO in piloting the inquiry based science programme, which provides hands-on experience in facilitating the learning of concepts in mathematics and science. UNESCO’s support towards our efforts in introducing climate change education for sustainable development and, giving us the opportunity of being a part of UNESCO’s global micro-science regional joint project in the Caribbean should also be acknowledged.

32.8 Mr President, Guyana looks forward to UNESCO’s continued support in our efforts to achieve the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The Government of Guyana has already crafted and designed policies in ensuring equal access to quality education, information technology, immediate remedial programmes for dropouts focusing on literacy, numeracy and matriculation, and the provision of opportunities for young people to enter technical training institutes. It is our strong belief that every child has a right to knowledge, skills and values which would allow them to be the type of Guyani citizen required for the twenty-first century development of our country. To this end Guyana calls on UNESCO to partner with us in fostering the sustainable implementation of these programmes, and thereby affording us community access to a good life. I thank you.

33. **Le Président :**

Merci, Madame Nedd. La parole maintenant est à Mme June Chandler, Secrétaire générale du Ministère de l'éducation des Barbades.

34.1 **Ms Chandler** (Barbados):

Mr. President, Your Excellencies, heads of delegations, distinguished delegates. On behalf of the Minister of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation of Barbados, I take this opportunity to offer warmest congratulations to you on your assumption of the Presidency of this 38th session of the General Conference. I also wish to thank your distinguished predecessor for his contribution to the success of this Organization during the last biennium. I take special pleasure in congratulating Montserrat on being admitted as an Associate Member of this Organization.

34.2 Mr President, distinguished delegates, on behalf of the Government and people of Barbados we are especially pleased to celebrate the 70th anniversary of this august Organization. This is indeed a critical moment in the history of the Organization and a perfect time to reaffirm Barbados' commitment to the founding principles of UNESCO, while pledging our continued support to the work of the Organization.

34.3 Distinguished delegates, in 1945 37 countries decided to found UNESCO. Today, 70 years later, and on the eve of Barbados' own celebration of our 50th anniversary of Independence in 2016, UNESCO's Constitution remains highly relevant to achieving the purpose articulated so long ago.

34.4 Mr President, we recognize that an important crossroads has been reached for the international community. In May of this year, global leaders in education gathered at the World Education Forum in Incheon to review progress made since 2000 with the education for all (EFA) goals, and the related Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The convening of the 2015 Forum presented an opportunity for the global education community to reach consensus on a common vision for education in the post-2015 period. The Incheon Declaration articulated agreement on a new Education 2030 Framework for Action agenda, inspired by a humanistic vision of education and underpinned by the principle that education is a public good, a fundamental human right and a basis for guaranteeing the realization of other rights. It is also essential for peace, human fulfilment and sustainable development. Barbados is deeply committed to all these ideals. We also recognize the important role of science, technology and innovation in sustaining development and therefore support UNESCO's promotional efforts in this area. Mr President, Barbados pledges its support for the implementation of the Education 2030 Framework For Action. Indeed we commit ourselves to developing the programmes and activities necessary to ensure its success.

34.5 Distinguished ladies and gentlemen, we are heartened by the efforts and work of the Director-General over this last biennium to lead and manage the Organization in difficult circumstances. We generally support the reforms that have been initiated in light of the financial challenges in order to ensure the Organization's ability to deliver effectively in its fields of competence.

34.6 Mr President, the recent disaster in our sister Caribbean island of Dominica, as a result of tropical storm Erika, reminds us of the vulnerabilities of small island developing States (SIDS) and the need for a global response to climate change that is binding. We therefore look forward to strong and assertive action to address issues of climate change and disaster risk reduction being taken and a strong commitment to supporting the sustainability of SIDS. Indeed, within this context, Barbados has demonstrated its strong commitment to the tsunami and coastal hazards early warning system through the hosting of the Caribbean Tsunami Information Centre.

34.7 Mr President, preserving and accessing information and documentary heritage continue to be priorities for Barbados. In this regard, we have worked closely with the Secretariat and other Member States throughout the development of the new normative instrument to support the sustainability of UNESCO's action in this area. Such a standard-setting instrument can be an essential tool to strengthen international cooperation and raise public awareness to address the challenges of safeguarding documentary heritage.

34.8 Barbados shares the conviction that no development can be sustainable without a strong culture component. Indeed only a human-centred approach to development based on mutual respect and open dialogue among cultures can lead to lasting, inclusive and equitable results. We have closely engaged in the elaboration of the new Recommendation on Museums and Collections, and look forward to its initiation. Barbados remains committed to the implementation of the culture conventions to which we are signatory.

34.9 We further lend our support to the global efforts in the protection and preservation of tangible and intangible heritage, particularly in the context of UNESCO's initiatives for disaster risk reduction, and our elaboration of plans for the creation of a category 2 centre for world heritage and SIDS, as a lasting legacy of the 21-year-old Barbados Programme for Action and in keeping with the Samoa Pathway. Mr President, I thank you.

35. **The President:**

Thank you, Ms Chandler. Our next speaker is Mr Ian McKinnon, Chair of the New Zealand National Commission for UNESCO. I give you the floor, Sir.

36.1 **Mr McKinnon** (New Zealand):

Mr President, Madam Director-General, distinguished people. I greet you in the language of the first people of New Zealand Mauri. *E nga mana, e nga reo, e nga iwi, e rau rangatira ma. Nau mai, haere mai, piki mai. Tena kotou, tena kotou, tena tatou katoa. Kia ora hui hui mai tatou katoa.* (All peoples of the world, all speakers, all the chiefly peoples here, all groups. Welcome, welcome, welcome to you all. Greetings to all gathered here). And I particularly pass greetings to our friends of the Pacific. *Talofa lava, malo leilei, bula vinaka, kia orana.*

36.2 Mr President, New Zealand considers that UNESCO's mandate remains as relevant today as it did in 1946. This year and next year New Zealand is serving on the United Nation's Security Council. We are seeing first hand results when States and communities are at war. We are seeing conflicts that defy national borders, conflicts that draw on

ideologies of hatred and violence. We are reminded time and again that we must build the defences of peace in the minds of men and women. UNESCO's mandate to foster international connections in the promotion and protection of culture, in education, in the sciences is fundamental to this, as is UNESCO's work in highlighting the importance of freedom of expression including ensuring the safety of journalists.

36.3 UNESCO also has a special role in working with the United Nations Security Council, including making sure the illicit trade in cultural property is not allowed to fund conflicts, and to ensure those tasked with keeping the peace know that this also includes safeguarding heritage. UNESCO Member States must ensure that we all work constructively here in Paris to build peace. We must not use our Organization to add fuel to the fires of conflicts.

36.4 Mr President, 2015 has been a big year for the United Nations system with the agreement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). What an achievement they are! The SDGs commit all countries, big and small, rich and poor, to work towards shared goals. UNESCO's work is integral to many of the SDGs. New Zealand will be looking to UNESCO to continue to ensure its education, science, culture and communication efforts contribute to our collective achievement of these goals. And we will be drawing on UNESCO's collective expertise in our own implementation of these strategic Sustainable Development Goals. We acknowledge the work here of the UNESCO Office for the Pacific States in our region and we also acknowledge the leadership of Etienne Clément in addressing issues affecting the area.

36.5 We strongly support the view that small island developing States' (SIDS) interest must be accorded high priority. There is urgency. It is imperative that the actions outlined in the SIDS Action Plan be prioritized in UNESCO's Programme and Budget. We know that funds are tight, but so too is time.

36.6 Mr President, New Zealand was delighted that our region was chosen to host the 3rd International Conference on Small Island Developing States in 2014. We congratulate the Government and people of Samoa for an outstanding conference. I should add that we hope that all States will support Samoa's candidacy for UNESCO's Executive Board.

36.7 Mr President, New Zealand also wishes to commend UNESCO for the emphasis it is placing on the importance of education. I was delighted and honoured to be present at the launch of the Education 2030 Framework for Action. While return on investment is not necessarily immediate, investment in education always brings value to a society. We must not forget, taking the 1982 theme of Neil Postman, that young people are the living messages we send to a time we may, in fact, not see. UNESCO's role for 70 years is, and continues to be, to foster the development of creative and innovative ideas. May this continue, not least in education, thus ensuring that new ideas are available to all members for their deliberations in this important area.

36.8 Mr President, New Zealand has been a strong supporter of UNESCO since the beginning. Our National Commission works effectively in New Zealand to take the Organization's mission and make it real to communities, supporting programmes across the range of UNESCO sectors. The New Zealand Government remains committed to supporting our National Commission in this work.

36.9 Our country is an independent, fair-minded, principled and constructive small State. We will play our part within the United Nations. We are involved obviously in New York. We are playing our part in Paris. We continue to play our part in our own region. Mr President, Madam Director-General, distinguished people, we greet you again, and wish you well. *No rei ra, tena Koutou, tena koutou, tena tatou katoa.*

37. **The President:**

Thank you Mr McKinnon. Our next speaker is Dr Rudolph Anthony, Secretary-General of Belize National Commission for UNESCO.

38.1 **Mr Anthony (Belize):**

Mr President of the General Conference, Mr Chair of the Executive Board, Madam Director-General, Excellencies, distinguished ladies and gentlemen. It is an honour and a privilege once more to stand before you today at this 38th session of the General Conference of UNESCO to present Belize's position.

38.2 Mr President, we at UNESCO represent the world, and so "we are the world." Belize stands firm and tall with UNESCO as we are proud to be a member of this extraordinary body of Member States. Belize continues to embrace the ideals, principles, policies, strategies, mission, and Constitution of UNESCO. And you know why Mr President? Because "we are the world." I want to declare that Belize has benefited handsomely from being a partner with UNESCO. We have benefited from the Participation Programme, from the Young Professional's programme, from the Youth Forum, from the collaboration and synergies between Directors-General and our field office in the Caribbean, from collaboration and participation with Secretaries General from across the universe through interregional National Commission meetings. And we continue to move forward and you know why, Mr President? Because "we are the world."

38.3 We continue to make strides in education, in primary education, secondary education, higher education, technical and vocational education and training (TVET), early childhood education, education for those with different abilities, teacher training, literacy campaigns by encouraging all to read at specific times, and developing quality child friendly school initiatives. We have approved projects for the Cancer Society, Belize Red Cross, The Council of Ageing, and Restore Belize, which is an organization to help young men and women to choose an alternative to crime, violence, and killings. We have made Belizeans more aware of UNESCO through training, workshops and conferences in statistics, in TVET, higher education, tsunamis, freedom of the press, underwater cultural heritage, intangible cultural heritage, nomination dossiers, world heritage awareness, early childhood training, arts and crafts, and training of young journalists. Thanks to UNESCO for all the assistance. Why? Because UNESCO knows that "we are the world." We benefit from the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) and the World Heritage Centre, their knowledge and expert guidance for our world heritage sites in danger.

38.4 Mr President, we should not and cannot continue to try and be the big police of the world who want to lock out other countries from becoming members of UNESCO. We must be inclusive and learn to share, care, love and live in

peace, for “we are the world.” Mr President, let us team up together as one family and fight against violent extremism, fight against the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS), Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), and against any hate- and war-mongers that try to destroy our way of life which should include peace, love, harmony, patience, compassion, cooperation, freedom and non-violence, one to the other. Mother Teresa once said, “Intense love does not measure, it just gives.” She also said, “Not all of us can do great things, but we can do small things with great love.” and Mother Teresa also said, “If we have no peace, it is because we have forgotten that we belong to each other.” Mr President, remember who we are, “we are the world.”

38.5 Belize has benefited from science, social and human sciences, culture, and the information and communication programmes. We have implemented micro-science kits in some of our high schools and expect to expand the programme. We have ratified the 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions this year. We are also looking for key results to be achieved during 2016-2017. We embraced the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and now the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially Goal 4. We embrace education for sustainable development (ESD). We embrace the Education 2030 Framework for Action and the Incheon Declaration. We will work to increase more access to schools, and increase quality in educational teaching and learning. We will continue to secure a healthy environment for our children to learn and will continue to address violence and discrimination of all types. Why? Because “we are the world.” We stand to respect diversity, practice fundamental human rights, provide safe spaces for our children to learn without fear and respect the dignity of every human being.

38.6 UNESCO is the world, Mr President. We, as a body and family, have been transformed because of some difficulties we had. But it worked out for the best. We did more with less. Nelson Mandela once said, “Difficulties break some men but make others.” We have been made through difficulties so “we are the world.” I want to make an appeal to the Sheik. Remember the Sheik who came here and gave us some good money? I want to make an appeal to Japan, to Sweden, Finland, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, South Korea, Germany, China, and all the rich countries. When you bring in your extrabudgetary funds, please remember to give Belize some and please remember to give some to the Caribbean? You know, I am scared to beg because “we are the world.”

38.7 Mr President, President John F. Kennedy said, “Change is the law of life.” And so if we will change for the better, let us not just utter words, but live by them. Maya Angelou once said, “We may encounter many defeats, but we must never be defeated.” UNESCO will never be defeated. I believe in UNESCO because “we are the world.” And if I had time I would sing the chorus for you “We are the world.” Thank you and God bless.

39. **The President:**

Thank you, Dr Anthony for this passionate speech. And our next speaker is Ms Armgard Weihe, Deputy Secretary General of Faroes National Commission, for UNESCO. You have the floor.

40.1 **Ms Weihe (Faroes):**

Mr President of the General Conference, Mr Chair of the Executive Board, Madam Director-General, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen. The role of UNESCO in “building peace in the minds of men and women” is more relevant than ever. Celebrating the 70th anniversary of UNESCO, we look forward to working together in the years to come. It is a great pleasure for me to attend this 38th session of the General Conference and on behalf of the Faroese Minister of Education, Research and Culture, Ms Rigmor Dam, to speak at this prominent session. Being an Associate Member since 2009, the Faroes value the opportunity of cooperation in this global forum, and I would like to congratulate Montserrat on becoming an Associated Member of UNESCO.

40.2 The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development sets out to take bold and transformative steps to shift the world onto a sustainable and resilient path. The global and broad mandate puts UNESCO in a central position in contributing to reaching the ambitious goals formulated for the next 15 years. With an ambition of eradicating extreme poverty and securing peace, human rights, education, gender equality and freedom of expression are central to a successful outcome of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

40.3 The challenges are immense: Poverty, inequalities, unemployment, conflicts, disasters and related humanitarian crises are present in an excessive degree. We face natural resources depletion and environmental degradation, and the impacts of climate change are increasingly affecting our lives. How can we overcome these adverse impacts on our planet? The global partnership calls for every single one of us to act.

40.4 Situated in the North Atlantic Ocean, the Faroe Islands for more than 70 years has developed a prosperous society and an increasingly self-governed nation under the external sovereignty of the Kingdom of Denmark. This development has called for continued capacity building in all parts of our society. Visioning a sustainable future with renewable energy, the Faroese Power Company, owned by the municipalities in the Faroe Islands, has set a target for the islands being 100% supplied by renewable energy by 2030. To an island society that only a few years ago was heavily dependent on fossil fuels these are ambitious targets and it was with much pride that the company received the Nordic Council Nature and Environment Prize 2015 at a prestigious ceremony held last week by the Nordic Council in Reykjavík. Immense effort and focused action will be needed in order to achieve the ambitious goal by 2030. Sharing knowledge and cooperation are key to achieving sustainable development and are highly relevant issues for UNESCO to foster.

40.5 UNESCO’s work on education is of particular importance, as we strongly believe that the right to education for all is essential for societies to thrive. The Faroes welcome the commitment in the Education 2030 Framework for Action to inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning for all. Education is a basic human right and fundamental to sustainable development and so is creativity, art and heritage. The destruction of our shared cultural heritage is heart-breaking and we welcome actions taken by UNESCO in this matter including the “#Unite4heritage” campaign. We find that the standard-setting instruments in UNESCO’s conventions and recommendations are of huge importance to national heritage management. Freedom of expression and the safety of journalists are issues that concern all of us and are valuable parts of UNESCO’s work.



40.6 In terms of gender equality, I am proud to inform you that for the first time, the Government of the Faroes has achieved gender equality, as the share of men and women holding posts as ministers in the Government is fifty-fifty – after all gender equality is a necessary foundation for the creation of a sustainable and peaceful society. Thank you for your attention.

41. **Le Président :**

Merci, Madame Weihe. Le prochain orateur, c'est Son Excellence M. Federico Renjifo, le délégué permanent de la Colombie à l'UNESCO.

42.1 **Sr. Renjifo (Colombia):**

Señor Presidente, Señoras y Señores Ministros, Jefes de Delegación, Embajadores y Delegados. Deseo comenzar citando las palabras del Presidente de Colombia, Juan Manuel Santos, al dirigirse a la Asamblea General de la ONU en este año: "la paz es el bien supremo de una sociedad – el más sagrado – y la razón de ser del sistema de Naciones Unidas. El legado más valioso que podemos dejarle a las futuras generaciones es la paz. ¡Nada puede haber más importante ni más urgente!". Colombia está recorriendo el camino final hacia una solución real a un conflicto armado que inicio hace cincuenta años, y que confiamos concluya en el año 2016 con los acuerdos de paz. Una Colombia en paz será una Colombia con más oportunidades para todos. Donde sigamos disminuyendo la pobreza, garantizando más y mejor educación, y generando empleo. Esa paz tan anhelada nos lleva a inventar una nueva forma de convivencia. Nos conduce al perdón, a la reconciliación, a la esperanza. Y esto hace que nuestra presencia en esta Conferencia cobre un nuevo sentido.

42.2 Pero una paz verdaderamente duradera solo se podrá construir fundamentada sobre una sociedad más justa e incluyente. Y por ello en este momento histórico para mi país, los valores esenciales de la UNESCO coinciden con la bitácora que orienta nuestro desarrollo. No en vano los tres pilares del gobierno de Colombia son la paz, la equidad, y la educación. En este contexto, la educación juega un papel central en el escenario del post-conflicto. A través de las "Cátedras para la Paz" y del Sistema Nacional de Convivencia del Ministerio de Educación Nacional, se abren espacios de diálogo al interior de las aulas en torno a la construcción de una sociedad más democrática, participativa y pluralista. Este camino recorrido nos permitirá cumplir mejor con los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible de la Agenda 2030. Colombia integró el Grupo de Alto Nivel para el apoyo a la formulación de dichos objetivos, y es en esa medida saluda la reciente aprobación y reafirma su profundo compromiso con el Marco de Acción para la Educación.

42.3 En el ámbito de la cultura, Colombia ha trabajado en la aplicación efectiva de las Convenciones de la UNESCO, desarrollando políticas apropiadas para el contexto nacional. El país reconoce que hay grandes retos que exigen profundizar y priorizar su implementación, como las amenazas al patrimonio, incluidas las situaciones de conflicto, y el tráfico y le expropiación ilícita. Resaltamos la importancia de todas aquellas políticas que vinculen a la cultura con el desarrollo. Este año Colombia logró la inscripción, junto con cinco países de la región, del Sistema Vial Andino /Qhapaq Ñan en la Lista del Patrimonio Mundial, bien que precisa una gestión transnacional a escala continental. Asimismo, Colombia destaca el retiro de la lista en peligro del Parque Nacional Los Katíos, ejemplo único en materia de cumplimiento de las recomendaciones del Comité para reforzar su estructura de manejo. Finalmente, reiteramos nuestra solidaridad con los países que están siendo víctimas de la destrucción de su Patrimonio Cultural. Entendemos el enorme impacto de la pérdida de vidas y del Patrimonio de la Humanidad como la pérdida irreparable de la memoria, y apoyamos decididamente los esfuerzos de la UNESCO en reacción a estos lamentables hechos.

42.4 Es preciso señalar que para Colombia la riqueza biológica representa una herramienta única para el desarrollo económico y social a largo plazo. El país cuenta con cerca del 14% de la biodiversidad del planeta, y por ello considera fundamental el Programa MAB, a través del cual ha trabajado por lograr una la relación equilibrada entre el ser humano, su medio ambiente, y el desarrollo sostenible en sus cinco Reservas de Biosfera. Aplaudimos la presentación de la Estrategia del MAB 2015-2025 y valoramos el trabajo preparatorio hacia la formulación de un plan de acción del mismo. No obstante, somos altamente vulnerables a los efectos del cambio climático. La mitigación y la adaptación son prioridades en la política ambiental nacional, y esperamos que la COP21 incluya compromisos vinculantes que reemplacen el Protocolo de Kioto. Colombia también otorga la mayor importancia a los océanos y a su incidencia en el cambio climático, reafirma su compromiso con la Comisión Oceanográfica Intergubernamental en su calidad de miembro de su Consejo Ejecutivo, y como país sede en la subcomisión regional IOCARIBE en Cartagena.

42.5 En concordancia con el mandato de la UNESCO, reconocemos en el deporte una herramienta de cohesión social y promoción del desarrollo integral. Nuestras políticas se dirigen en forma prioritaria a poblaciones en situación de vulnerabilidad, en condición de desplazamiento forzado y en proceso de reintegración social. Estamos abocados a hacer de Colombia un país donde el deporte esté a la vuelta de la esquina de la casa de cada niño, en la ruta hacia su colegio, en su barrio. Por eso participamos de manera activa y comprometida en el Comité Intergubernamental para la Educación Física y el Deporte. Colombia reafirma el mandato de la UNESCO de ampliar y asegurar el acceso a la información y el conocimiento, principio fundamental de la libertad de expresión, derecho sin el que es imposible pensar la democracia.

42.6 La estrategia de Colombia para el mejoramiento del acceso a las comunicaciones es el Plan Vive Digital, mediante el cual se ha dado un gran salto tecnológico a través de la masificación del uso de internet con el fin de reducir la pobreza y generar empleo. Este Plan fue reconocido como la mejor política del mundo en su género en el año 2012, logrando transformaciones que incluyen haber pasado de 2 a 10 millones de conexiones a internet en el territorio nacional, y de 24 a 9 niños que comparten un computador o tableta en las escuelas públicas. Para concluir, agradecer los esfuerzos de la Doctora Irina Bukova para sacar adelante los objetivos de esta organización y permítame reiterar en nombre del Presidente de Colombia, la convicción que tenemos sobre la trascendencia de la UNESCO en la construcción de la paz y la efectiva implementación de una nueva agenda de desarrollo para fomentar un futuro más equitativo y sostenible. Muchas gracias.

43. **The President:**

Thank you very much, Your Excellency. Our next speaker is Her Excellency Ms Janeil Henry Rose, Secretary-General of the National Commission to UNESCO of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. You have the floor, Madam.

44.1 **Ms Rose** (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines to UNESCO):

Mr President, Madam Director-General, Mr Chair of the Executive Board, Ministers, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen. Mr President, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines congratulates you on your election to the Presidency of the General Conference and wishes you every success. May I take this opportunity to thank the outgoing President, Mr Hao Ping, and the Chair of the Executive Board, Mr Mohammed Sameh Amr, for their outstanding leadership and commitment during their respective tenures. Saint Vincent and the Grenadines welcomes Montserrat, our sister Caribbean Island, as an Associate Member of UNESCO.

44.2 Mr President, small island developing States (SIDS) are a priority target group for the Organization. We look to UNESCO to ensure that programmes and activities in all areas of competency meet the needs of this special group of countries and are adequately funded. Our priorities are education and climate change and its negative effects on the islands. We look forward to deepened cooperation that would also enable us to build inclusive knowledge societies for sustainable development and to protect our heritage and foster creativity.

44.3 We therefore welcome UNESCO's Draft Action Plan for SIDS and look forward to adopting it at the 199th session of the Executive Board. We aim to integrate in the future a mechanism identifying the specific activities that would directly benefit SIDS. We are aware that extrabudgetary funds are needed to cover this action plan. This will require a structured dialogue with the donors.

44.4 Mr President, clearly the challenges, both for UNESCO and for Member States, arising from the post-2015 development agenda and the new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are considerable. SIDS will need your support if they are to achieve these goals by 2030 and we think UNESCO is well placed to help provide this through its high-level expertise, capacity building, policy advice and mutual cooperation.

44.5 Goals which are especially important to my country include goal 4, that is, to "ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities" and goal 13 to "take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts". We look forward to UNESCO contributing in a leading and coordination role on education and also to participating in the delivery of goal 13. In this regard, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines believes that the functions of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) are closely linked to Sustainable Development Goals 13 and 14 and that its role should be strengthened.

44.6 Mr President, our key challenge remains finding ways to adapt and mitigate climate change. Climate change is reaping havoc on the social and economic life of Caribbean countries. In Saint Vincent and the Grenadines we recall the destructive floods of December 2013 with many homes destroyed, lives lost, roads and other communications disrupted and extensively damaged. We cannot wait for more disasters to strike. We call upon UNESCO to help us to continue to improve our preparedness ahead of imminent natural disasters through early-warning systems; and identify and strengthen scientific communities across the region.

44.7 We welcome the Education 2030 Framework for Action which UNESCO launched in response to Sustainable Development Goal 4. In line with the new targets, we call on UNESCO to prioritize quality teaching through appropriate methods, including quality teacher training and development. Our country continues to focus on technical and vocational education and training (TVET) and the development of skills for the workplace, particularly among youth. We aim to reform TVET so that we have an enhanced and sustainable system.

44.8 Saint Vincent and the Grenadines hopes that efforts will continue to be made to strengthen the relationship between the Secretariat and field offices which are at the centre of delivering UNESCO's mandate. We remind the Secretariat that we need adequate resources so that our plans and programmes can be properly executed, ultimately raising the visibility of the Organization. We believe that UNESCO, through its intersectoral action, can contribute more than ever in a world of conflicts. Culture of peace should be a continuous action to encourage more dialogue and reconciliation, and to spread the message of tolerance and mutual understanding so as to build a better world. Mr President, I wish to reiterate my country's commitment to UNESCO and pledge continued support to achieving the mandate of this esteemed Organization. I thank you.

45. **The President:**

Thank you very much, Your Excellency. The next speaker is His Excellency Mr Jean-Frédéric Jauslin, Ambassador, Permanent Delegate of Switzerland to UNESCO. Your Excellency, you have the floor.

46.1 **M. Jauslin** (Suisse) :

Monsieur le Président, Monsieur le Directeur général-Adjoint de l'UNESCO, Excellences, Mesdames, Messieurs, et, comme on dit dans mon pays, « *Grüezi mitenand!* » Il y a 15 ans déjà, le passage à l'an 2000 fut l'occasion d'innombrables promesses. Cette euphorie alors... désormais dépassée malheureusement, a été rattrapée par la complexité de la mondialisation, de ses interactions et de ses crises. Aujourd'hui, la communauté internationale est prise entre conflits et perspectives, entre attentes et responsabilités et à la recherche de propositions concertées. Afin d'éviter un repli plus grand, un danger plus imminent, nous avons le devoir de prendre nos responsabilités politiques tout en respectant l'esprit multilatéral souvent mis à mal. Ce défi est immense et pourtant, nous devons nous souvenir que les Nations Unies, et l'UNESCO en particulier, sont les enfants de la guerre. Nous sommes donc les porteurs de la paix. Il est alors de notre responsabilité de préparer l'avenir grâce à des organisations inventives et prospectives.

46.2 Ces dernières années, l'UNESCO a dû se réformer de manière drastique. Ses réformes sont positives. Pourtant, n'oublions pas que l'UNESCO a été affaiblie notamment par la suspension de la contribution américaine, et réduite dans sa capacité d'action. L'impact de cette décision nationale est regrettable. Dans ce sens, nous avons pris

bonne note aujourd'hui des propos du délégué américain qui nous a fait des promesses, et nous espérons qu'il va les tenir. Si l'on veut que l'UNESCO joue un rôle primordial au sein de la communauté internationale, si l'on veut que l'UNESCO fasse partie d'une architecture onusienne modernisée, tous les moyens financiers et opérationnels doivent être mis en œuvre. Les défis frappent à notre porte, nous ne devons pas les laisser passer. Ces défis sont les extrémismes, les destructions culturelles, les dénis de la démocratie, de justice ou de liberté ; ils doivent être impérativement combattus.

46.3 Dans ce contexte, la Suisse est attachée à trois objectifs. Le premier vise à une meilleure interaction entre les institutions onusiennes – de Paris, de Genève et de New York – afin de créer une synergie encore plus efficace. Le deuxième est un meilleur dialogue entre les membres de l'UNESCO, afin de déterminer nos objectifs communs. Le troisième est une meilleure gouvernance à exploiter avec audace, afin de faciliter la prise de décision. Je répète : interaction, dialogue et gouvernance sont les trois piliers de notre stratégie, au niveau de la Suisse, pour l'UNESCO. Nous devons davantage réfléchir à l'action de l'UNESCO, à sa fonction et à ses moyens. La Suisse estime que le projet de budget 2016-2017 de l'UNESCO représente un pas dans la bonne direction car il ouvre de nouvelles perspectives. C'est pourquoi nous le soutenons.

46.4 Dans le domaine de l'éducation, le budget doit permettre à l'UNESCO d'assumer son rôle de coordination de l'Objectif 4 de l'Agenda 2030. La Suisse est prête à accompagner activement la tâche qui revient à l'UNESCO et d'animer le dialogue politique participatif requis pour la mise en œuvre du Cadre d'action pour l'éducation, celui que nous avons adopté formellement ce 4 novembre. La Suisse va continuer à appuyer le travail de suivi et d'évaluation de l'UNESCO. Ce travail doit servir les États membres dans l'application de leur politique et dans la réalisation de leurs objectifs.

46.5 Dans le domaine de la science, il est impératif que la recherche de nouvelles technologies nous concerne tous. L'innovation change profondément nos règles économique, politique et sociale. L'UNESCO a un devoir fondamental vis-à-vis de la science. Elle doit se placer en précurseur en facilitant les échanges entre les milieux académiques et les milieux diplomatiques.

46.6 Enfin, il est urgent de répondre aux enjeux culturels. Il s'agit tout d'abord d'accroître la ratification des Conventions, de soutenir leur transcription dans les législations nationales et de s'assurer de l'effectivité de leur mise en œuvre. En outre, l'agenda de la culture doit trouver un écho bien au-delà de l'UNESCO. Le Conseil de sécurité, le Conseil des droits de l'homme, la Cour pénale internationale, les forums humanitaires doivent tous être mobilisés afin de compléter et de renforcer la protection de la culture dans sa dimension tant matérielle qu'immatérielle.

46.7 Enfin, Mesdames et Messieurs, j'aimerais terminer mon propos sur un aspect qui nous importe au plus haut point dans mon pays : la protection du patrimoine culturel en danger. La Suisse a développé et mis en vigueur une législation innovante en la matière. Elle est notamment le premier pays au monde à proposer la mise à disposition de ce que l'on appelle un « Safe Haven », servant à abriter temporairement des biens culturels en danger. Sachez que ce refuge est opérationnel dans mon pays et que ses modalités d'application – que ce soit le transport, le stockage, la conservation et la restitution des biens – sont clairement définies. C'est la raison pour laquelle, Madame la Directrice générale, la Suisse attend avec impatience de l'UNESCO qu'elle se fasse la promotrice de cet engagement de sauvegarde du patrimoine, qu'elle y apporte sa caution morale et que des accords concrets puissent être conclus. Certaines parties de notre patrimoine culturel mondial sont aujourd'hui en grand danger, c'est de notre devoir de les sauver. La Suisse est prête à jouer un rôle actif dans ce domaine. La Suisse est prête à jouer un rôle actif et significatif à l'UNESCO. Je vous remercie de votre attention.

47. **The President:**

Thank you very much, Your Excellency. Our next speaker is Her Excellency Ms Elaine Ayotte, Ambassador, Permanent Delegate of Canada to UNESCO. Your Excellency, you have the floor.

48.1 **Mme Ayotte (Canada) :**

Monsieur le Président, Monsieur le représentant de la Directrice générale, Excellences, Mesdames et Messieurs, je suis honorée de prononcer cette allocution au nom du Canada en ce 70<sup>e</sup> anniversaire de l'UNESCO. Le Canada a une longue et fière tradition de chef de file sur la scène internationale. Nous avons joué un rôle constructif dans la création de l'UNESCO – avant, pendant et après la Conférence de Londres. Notre nouveau Premier Ministre, Justin Trudeau, compte affirmer haut et fort que le Canada renforcera ce rôle actif et constructif dans le système onusien et d'autres organisations multilatérales. Que ce soit la lutte contre les changements climatiques, la lutte contre l'extrémisme violent, la lutte contre la pauvreté, la lutte contre les inégalités basées sur le genre : un multilatéralisme efficace « inscrit à l'enseigne du dialogue des cultures » n'a jamais été aussi urgent.

48.2 En éducation, l'UNESCO doit servir de plate-forme entre les différents partenaires et ordres de gouvernements compétents en la matière, et favoriser le développement d'indicateurs, la collecte de données et le suivi de la mise en œuvre de l'Objectif du développement durable 4. Le Canada retient l'importance de l'Institut de Statistique de l'UNESCO, dont le siège est chez nous, à Montréal, et appuie fièrement la préparation du Rapport mondial de suivi de l'Éducation pour tous. Source première de données fiables et comparables en éducation à travers le monde, ce rapport s'inspire fortement des données de l'Institut.

48.3 Il y a beaucoup à faire pour soutenir les plus pauvres et les plus vulnérables, particulièrement ceux affligés par les conflits armés ou en situation d'urgence. On le martèle à notre tour, 120 millions d'enfants et de jeunes, dont la majorité des filles, ne sont toujours pas scolarisés. C'est inadmissible. Nous devons trouver les moyens pour que tous les enfants et les jeunes aient accès à une éducation de qualité dans un environnement sécuritaire, et s'assurer qu'ils apprennent et développent les compétences leur permettant de contribuer à la « communauté de destinées » qu'a évoqué M. Hao Ping.

48.4 Je suis donc heureuse d'annoncer que l'UNESCO et notre commission nationale organiseront à Ottawa, en 2017, année célébrant le 150<sup>e</sup> anniversaire du Canada, le Forum d'évaluation du Programme d'action globale pour l'Éducation au développement durable et le 3<sup>e</sup> Forum sur l'Éducation à la citoyenneté mondiale. L'UNESCO et la Commission canadienne uniront à nouveau leurs efforts afin de positionner l'inclusion, la diversité et l'élimination de toute forme de discrimination comme vecteurs d'un développement urbain durable et équitable lors d'Habitat III.

48.5 L'UNESCO contribuera aux objectifs du développement durable en s'assurant que ses programmes ciblent l'égalité des genres et l'autonomie de toutes les femmes et les filles et en veillant à ce que ses indicateurs y soient sensibles. L'UNESCO doit, sans relâche, promouvoir la liberté d'expression, l'accès du public à l'information, les données ouvertes, et le respect des libertés fondamentales. La sécurité des journalistes est cruciale. Tout aussi essentielle est la promotion d'un Internet accessible et libre d'entraves, s'appuyant sur les droits de la personne et un modèle de gouvernance multipartenaires.

48.6 Monsieur le Président, la mise en œuvre de la Convention sur la protection et la promotion de la diversité des expressions culturelles, notamment à l'ère du numérique, est également une priorité pour le Canada, et pour le Québec qui, depuis neuf ans, joue un rôle actif au sein de notre délégation auprès de l'UNESCO. Je salue, ici, la contribution supplémentaire du Gouvernement du Québec au Fonds international pour la diversité culturelle, et sa mise à disposition à l'UNESCO, chaque année, de plusieurs jeunes diplômés, en qualité de stagiaire.

48.7 S'inspirant des conclusions du Forum des jeunes, l'UNESCO doit donner vie à son Cadre d'action intégré « Engager la jeunesse pour une paix durable » qui souligne l'importance des interventions intersectorielles. Ce bel exemple doit faire boule de neige.

*(L'oratrice poursuit en anglais.)*

48.8 Mr President, unfortunately, racism and anti-Semitism remain scourges which affect all societies to different degrees. This year, Canada supported the International Day of Commemoration in memory of the victims of the Holocaust, and co-funded a follow-up seminar to help countries integrate Holocaust education into their educational curricula. Remembering the victims of the Shoah, learning about this dark chapter in world history and reflecting on the dangers of anti-Semitism give new resolve to the words "never again".

48.9 Recent attacks on heritage, the study of history, and science must be seen as attacks on our common humanity. Intentional destructions, notably in the ancient city of Palmyra and the murder of its former curator, are truly unspeakable acts. As a country built on, and strengthened by, its multicultural diversity, Canada supports the Director-General's efforts to reinforce UNESCO action to protect cultural heritage and stress the importance of heritage and diversity in other United Nations fora.

48.10 Mr President, perhaps no issue reminds us more that we are all part of one world than the threat to our collective well-being posed by climate change. Canada takes this challenge seriously and will make real contributions to reductions in our emission of greenhouse gases in support of an effective post-2020 climate change agreement. UNESCO will, of course, have an important follow-up role to play in its areas of competence. In this regard, the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) and the International Hydrological Programme (IHP) remind us of the important role that sound and independent science must play in government decisions.

48.11 One critical question we still face is how to finance the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Canada therefore welcomes a structured financing dialogue within UNESCO. A key objective must be further progress in implementing results-based budgeting and in demonstrating results. Mr President, let us make the Director-General's call for dialogue and consensus our own in order to push forward UNESCO's mandates. Thank you.

49. **The President:**

Thank you very much, Your Excellency. Our next speaker is His Excellency Mr Hersey Kyota, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Palau to the United States of America. Your Excellency, you have the floor.

50.1 **Mr Kyota (Palau):**

Mr President, Madam Director-General, Members of the Executive Board, Excellencies, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen. On behalf of my delegation, let me congratulate you, Mr President, on your election as President of the 38th session of the General Conference of UNESCO. I would also like to commend you, Madam Director-General, for your wisdom and commitment to the principles of UNESCO, and your leadership and hard work in keeping this House in order.

50.2 Sixteen years ago, I had the distinct honour and privilege to give our inaugural and acceptance address to the 30th session of the General Conference, after signing the legal instrument in London to become the newest member of UNESCO on September 20, 1999. We have treasured our membership in this august body in the last 16 years and are looking forward to the next 16 years.

50.3 In Palau, we continue to reform and improve our education system. Our culture and traditions are practised every day in homes, in schools, workplaces, and public and private public gatherings as we strive to preserve our way for life for generations to come. Thanks to UNESCO, Palau has received funding assistance in the areas of education, gender equality, language, cultural preservation and environmental protection.

50.4 Because environment is so important to us as an island State, my remarks today will focus on conservation and protection of the environment. "Preserve the best and improve the rest" - a simple phrase coined by President Remengesau in the early 1990s, which quickly became a popular slogan, synonymous with the environment. From that very slogan, conservation and protection of the environment became his passion. In 2005, he issued an initiative and challenged the leaders of our Micronesia region to sign up to it. This initiative launched in Rio in 2006 is known as the Micronesia Challenge, designed to preserve 20% of our terrestrial areas and 30% of our offshore area by 2020. Little did we know, the Challenge inspired other regions to do the same. Under the Micronesia Challenge, protected area networks

(PAN) were established in designated reefs and marine areas around Palau. In 2009, at the United Nations General Assembly, Palau declared its territorial water as a shark sanctuary, becoming the first country in the world to do so.

50.5 About a year and half ago, President Remengesau took yet another challenge, and I am happy to report today that with the approval of our Congress, such a challenge has become a reality. On 28 October 2015, just a few days ago, President Remengesau signed into law the Palau National Marine Sanctuary Act, creating one of the world's largest marine sanctuaries, designating over 80% of our exclusive economic zone (EEZ) as a safe haven for sharks, whales, tuna and countless other precious marine species. This law will protect and preserve our marine species by banning commercial fishing and deep sea mining in 80% of our EEZ. With the negative effects of climate change and decline of our fish stocks threatening our livelihood and food security, Palau saw the need to protect and preserve its oceans for the sake and future of our people.

50.6 For thousands of years, our ancestors depended on the ocean for sustenance and survival. Today our dependency has expanded to include economic and recreation activities. But with the threat of climate change and over-fishing by illegal and unlicensed fishing vessels poaching in our oceans, our economic security and survival are being threatened. Palau, like many small island developing States (SIDS), continues to face challenges in protecting our oceans and sea-based resources. Our President has emphasized time and again that "our environment is our economy and our economy is our environment". We are convinced that our action to close off our EEZ is a step in the right direction if we are to save our ocean and we welcome technical and scientific support from UNESCO and donor partners to achieve this goal.

50.7 On behalf of the President, the traditional leaders, the people and the Government of the Republic of Palau, I would like to express our sincere gratitude to UNESCO, and especially to the Director-General, Ms Bokova, for her continued support and assistance. We look forward to engaging and working with you to meet our obligations to this great Organization. I am confident that through our collective effort and cooperation, we can make a difference. Thank you very much.

51. **The President:**

Thank you very much, Your Excellency. Our next speaker is His Excellency Mr George Mina, Ambassador, Permanent Delegate of Australia to UNESCO. Your Excellency, you have the floor.

52.1 **Mr Mina (Australia):**

Mr President, Mr Deputy Director-General, distinguished delegates. May I, Mr President, congratulate you on your election to this important post and wish you well for the challenges that lie ahead. You take up this important role in UNESCO's 70th year. At its inception, the founders of the United Nations Charter recognized there was a need for a body such as UNESCO to reinforce the United Nation's broader objectives. International peace and security could not be achieved through political and economic might alone. Australia is proud to have been one of UNESCO's founding members.

52.2 Today, we are just as committed to UNESCO – and the United Nations system more broadly – as we were when it was established. Our Prime Minister, the Honourable Malcolm Turnbull, reiterated this commitment only a few weeks ago at our own 70th anniversary celebrations, when 35 iconic sites across Australia were lit blue. Two of these were UNESCO world heritage sites: the Sydney Opera House and Uluru. He spoke about the vitally important role the UNESCO and the United Nations continue to play in maintaining international peace and security; protecting the world's most vulnerable people; bringing together nations to address global challenges. He noted that the United Nations is alone in having the legitimacy and convening power to bring together 193 Member States to cooperate on issues that affect us all.

52.3 We all know that the United Nations and UNESCO's anniversary celebrations come at a time when countries must, more than ever, work together to address global challenges. We face multiple seemingly intractable conflicts, new manifestations of terrorism and the struggle to win over minds to the cause of radicalization, particularly among our youth. Indeed since we last gathered here in Paris, only two years ago, we have seen how these conflicts are impacting not only on the lives and livelihoods of millions of innocent people, but destroying precious antiquities and our cultural heritage. This deliberate destruction is an abhorrent crime and an assault on the very essence of humankind. It represents nothing less than an attempted assault on civilization itself.

52.4 We have witnessed an alarming rise in violent extremism, with terrorist activity no longer just the remit of large, identifiable organizations, but promulgated amongst an increasing number of rogue, disaffected individuals, with crude but effective tools to inflict significant damage on innocent lives. For these reasons, we welcome UNESCO's engagement in resolutions to support the protection of our common cultural heritage. We congratulate the Director-General on her particular efforts to condemn destruction of cultural heritage. We also support the High-Level Side Event on Preventing Violent Extremism through Education, which is continuing in parallel with this session today, recognizing as we do the importance of grassroots, community engagement to prevent the radicalization of youth at risk. We support the Director General's focus on engaging youth in this effort.

52.5 World heritage is also under threat from competing pressures associated with development and human-induced climate change. In Australia, we have faced our own challenges with the Great Barrier Reef. A year ago, the Reef was facing the possibility of being inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger. The World Heritage Committee had sent a very strong message to those responsible for the management of the Reef. A year later, the Committee was pleased to see that its message had been acknowledged and acted on in a powerful and well-resourced set of policies and actions. Our experience has reinforced the role of the world heritage regime as a powerful global tool in accompanying national efforts to preserve our common heritage.

52.6 With the move to a knowledge-intense society, human capital and the power of education are ever more critical. It is time now to unite in support of the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) on education. Articulating and agreeing on

this goal was a major achievement. Just two days ago, we adopted the Education 2030 Framework for Action. It is now time to contribute practically on the ground. We need to shape education norms in this era of globalization. Never before have there been so many students studying outside their own countries, developing skills and qualifications that can and should be transferable. That is why Australia supports a Global Convention on the Recognition of Higher Education Qualifications to support the growing global mobility of our best minds.

52.7 UNESCO is celebrating its 70th anniversary and we would like to congratulate the Organization for achieving this remarkable milestone. Mr President, Australia is proud to have associated itself through the 70-year journey as a founding member, as an active contributor through the years and as a strong supporter today of its mission, values and contribution to our common future.

53. **The President:**

Thank you very much, Your Excellency. Our next speaker is Her Excellency Ms Rachel Annick Ogoula Akiko, Ambassador, Permanent Delegate of Gabon to UNESCO. Your Excellency, you have the floor.

54.1 **Mme Ogoula Akiko (Gabon) :**

Monsieur le Président de la Conférence générale, Monsieur le Président du Conseil exécutif, Madame la Directrice générale, Honorables délégués, Mesdames et Messieurs. Monsieur le Président, au moment où il me revient de prendre la parole devant cette auguste Assemblée au nom de mon pays le Gabon, permettez-moi de vous adresser mes chaleureuses félicitations pour le choix judicieux porté sur votre personne afin de conduire les travaux de cette 38<sup>e</sup> session de l'UNESCO. Je suis convaincue que votre riche expérience sera pour nous le gage d'un succès assuré.

54.2 Je salue également la présence parmi nous de Mme Irina Bokova, Directrice générale de notre Organisation. Son engagement sans faille a su insuffler un nouvel élan à notre Maison, et ce dans un contexte inédit.

54.3 Monsieur le Président, la tenue tous les deux ans de la Conférence générale de l'UNESCO, instance privilégiée d'échange et de partage entre nos différents pays, a toujours été un moment fort de notre Organisation. Je saisis cette opportunité pour réaffirmer l'engagement du Gabon aux côtés de l'UNESCO et réitérer avec force notre complète adhésion aux valeurs énoncées dans son Acte constitutif. En effet, le Gabon croit également en l'édification d'un monde de paix, par la prévention des conflits, l'élimination de la pauvreté, le développement durable, le dialogue interculturel, l'éducation, les sciences, la culture et les Technologies de l'information et de la communication (TIC). C'est donc dans cet esprit et mobilisé autour de ces valeurs que le Gabon s'emploie à investir ses efforts aux côtés de l'UNESCO. Les nombreuses visites d'amitié et de travail que la Directrice générale a effectuées au Gabon, à l'invitation de S. E. M. Ali Bongo Ondimba, Président de la République, Chef de l'État, en sont la preuve. Aussi voudrais-je ajouter que ce partenariat nous est précieux dans la poursuite de nos objectifs de développement et de construction nationale.

54.4 Monsieur le Président, en matière d'éducation, le Gabon a été présent tout au long du processus qui a conduit à la mise en place d'un nouveau programme appelé « Éducation 2030 », après celui de l'Éducation pour tous (EPT) adopté en 2000 et dont l'échéance arrive à terme. Comme chacun le sait, ce programme a conduit à l'inscription, dans l'Agenda mondial post-2015, d'un cadre d'action qui vise à assurer une éducation inclusive et équitable pour tous et à promouvoir les possibilités d'apprentissage tout au long de la vie. Nous nous réjouissons de son adoption qui place la problématique de la qualité de l'éducation au centre de sa stratégie. Cette question interpelle au plus haut point mon pays, dont le système éducatif est caractérisé par un accès réussi à l'éducation universelle et par une parité parfaite entre filles et garçons, mais qui doit améliorer davantage la qualité de l'enseignement.

54.5 Monsieur le Président, dans le domaine des TIC, l'UNESCO et Airtel Gabon ont signé un accord de partenariat, le 16 octobre 2014, pour appuyer la formation scientifique de 5 000 jeunes Gabonais, de 17 à 35 ans, afin de promouvoir l'entrepreneuriat africain dans ce secteur. Ce projet, dénommé « Train My Generation », a été initié par le Président de la République, Chef de l'État, lors de la deuxième édition du New York Forum Africa.

54.6 Dans le domaine de la communication, le Gabon marque, depuis plusieurs années, des progrès encourageants en termes de pluralisme des médias ainsi que de libertés d'expression et d'information. Ceci est d'ailleurs appuyé par l'adoption, au cours de cette année 2015, d'une loi fixant les conditions d'exercice des activités de la communication. Cette législation innovante consacre la dépénalisation des délits de presse et établit l'application des peines pécuniaires.

54.7 En matière de culture, notre pays a adopté un instrument normatif intitulé « Les grands axes de la politique culturelle en République gabonaise », qui fixe un cadre de travail concerté. En effet, le Gabon souhaite faire de la culture un outil au service du développement, de la lutte contre la pauvreté et de la paix, en conformité avec les Objectifs de développement durable (ODD), adoptés en septembre dernier à New-York. Nous sommes heureux que les priorités qui y sont définies soient en parfaite cohérence avec celles prévues par l'UNESCO en matière de préservation du patrimoine, de promotion de la créativité et de la démocratie culturelle.

54.8 Par ailleurs, notre pays a réalisé de nombreux progrès dans le Secteur des sciences humaines et sociales au cours de ces dernières années. Ainsi, en matière de droits de l'homme, après avoir adopté en 2005 le Plan d'action du programme mondial (PAPM), le Gabon a élaboré un manuel sur les droits de l'enfant destiné aux écoles nationales de formation professionnelle. L'objectif de cette action vise à développer les connaissances des enseignants sur les droits de l'enfant. Ce manuel sera enseigné, à partir de cette année académique, dans les écoles de la magistrature, de la police et de la gendarmerie nationales.

54.9 Monsieur le Président, c'est sur ces mots que je voudrais clore mon propos sans oublier, une fois de plus, à l'occasion de son 70<sup>e</sup> anniversaire, de rappeler notre attachement à l'UNESCO qui reste la structure irremplaçable dans la poursuite des idéaux de paix, de tolérance, de respect de l'autre, de dialogue, de protection de l'environnement et partant de la promotion pour le développement durable. Je vous remercie.

55. **The President:**

Thank you very much, Your Excellency. Our next speaker is His Excellency, Mr Mariano Ebang Ebang Anguesomo, Ambassador, Permanent Delegate of Equatorial Guinea to UNESCO. Your Excellency, you have the floor.

56.1 **Sr. Anguesomo** (Republica de Guinea Ecuatorial):

Señor Presidente de la Conferencia General de la UNESCO Señor Presidente del Consejo Ejecutivo, Señora Director General de la UNESCO Honorables Delegados, Señoras y Señores: Ante todo felicito al Presidente de la Conferencia General por su brillante elección para dirigir los trabajos de esta Trigésima Octava sesión de la misma. Así como saludamos la acertada integración a esta gran familia de la UNESCO al Estado caribeño de la Isla de Montserrat en tanto como miembro asociado. Transmito a esta Conferencia General los saludos fraternales del Pueblo de la República de Guinea Ecuatorial y de su Presidente: Su Excelencia Obiang Nguema Mbasogo, quienes se congratulan por la celebración del septuagésimo aniversario de la UNESCO y el Foro de Dirigentes, actos que van a tener lugar durante esta trigésima octava Conferencia General. Auguramos asimismo nuestras esperanzas de que las recomendaciones y resoluciones que se tomen durante la misma, constituyan el mejor catalizador para construir una sociedad más equilibrada y libre de los actuales conflictos que provocan los incesantes flujos migratorios y desequilibrios sociales que frenan la evolución y desarrollo normal de la humanidad.

56.2 En este sentido, me complace Señor Presidente, expresarle los mejores deseos de que los trabajos de esta Conferencia General sirvan de orientación a los Estados Miembros para promover una cultura de paz, una educación de calidad para todos los seres humanos así como reafirmar los valores positivos de la cultura para su emancipación, su seguridad e integridad física y moral, con vistas a alcanzar los objetivos de la EPT (2015-2030). Nuestro país valora en alto y reconoce la valiosa contribución de la UNESCO que por su misión histórica ha tenido que liderar la conducción del tema de la educación en el mundo, diseñando estrategias dentro de un marco programático cada vez más progresivo y exigente con el fin de legar a la futura generación una herencia cultural, científica y técnica mucho más provechosa.

56.3 Señor Presidente, Honorables Delegados, Guinea Ecuatorial, en tanto como Estado miembro de la UNESCO comparte plenamente las metas, objetivos y enfoques estratégicos marcados por la nueva Agenda Educativa 2030, que atribuye a los sistemas educativos el deber de responder a las necesidades de los mercados laborales, a los avances tecnológicos, a los desafíos demográficos, y a la persistencia de la pobreza y amenazas de la paz mundial; todo eso conlleva y supone que los Estados miembros deben hacer el esfuerzo necesario para garantizar a los niños, jóvenes y adultos, las habilidades y competencias que requieran para vivir y trabajar en un mundo cada vez más exigente e interdependiente. Desde su adhesión a la independencia nacional en 1968, la República de Guinea Ecuatorial ha mantenido una estrecha cooperación y colaboración con la UNESCO en los dominios de formación de docentes, asistencia técnica y asesoramiento en diversas de su competencia y sobre todo cuando se ha creado la Universidad Nacional de Guinea Ecuatorial (La UNGE). En este sentido, me complace asegurarles que mi país ha logrado aumentar su cobertura escolar a través de programas de construcción de escuelas en las 857 comunidades rurales del País, ha implementado programas de educación infantil y pre-escolar, los cuales albergan hoy en día, el (72%) de los niños y niñas de esa edad. Asimismo, ha implementado un programas de formación de docentes, tanto desde la vertiente inicial como en reciclaje de los actuales, todo ella, Señoras y Señores, ha permitido que la tasa de matriculación alcanzara al día de hoy el (97 %) en todo el país.

56.4 En cuanto a la enseñanza superior, se acaba de crear la nueva Universidad Americana de Djibloho, que impartirá a partir del próximo curso sus clases en inglés y en español y con accesibilidad a cualquier estudiante de la subregión que lo desee. Y la propia Universidad Nacional La UNGE, que lleva funcionando desde hacen 20 años, también se ha visto reforzada con la inclusión de otras nuevas facultades con más accesibilidad al empleo de los nuevos egresados. Durante los últimos cinco años, también han sido desplegados esfuerzos colosales en cuanto a la enseñanza técnica y profesional, creando varios centros profesionales tanto públicos como privados en todas las cabeceras de provincia del ámbito nacional. Todo ello en acorde al programa del Gobierno con proyección a la emergencia de Guinea Ecuatorial para el "Horizonte 2020". Finalmente auguramos los mejores éxitos a la UNESCO, con el deseo de que esta celebre Organización del sistema de las Naciones Unidas, llegue a asumir, cada vez más su papel de laboratorio, y artífice de la verdadera Paz mundial, a través del dialogo, la tolerancia y el respeto mutua en todos los sentidos, y en base a los principios éticos y programáticos de los subsectores de educación, ciencias, cultura, comunicación y género. Muchas gracias.

57. **The President:**

Thank you very much, Your Excellency. The next speaker is His Excellency Mr Abdulkadr El Maleh, Ambassador, Permanent Delegate of Libya to UNESCO. Your Excellency, you now have the floor.

58.1 **السيد المالح** (ليبيا):

السيد رئيس المؤتمر العام، السيد رئيس المجلس التنفيذي، السيدة المديرية العامة لمنظمة اليونسكو، أصحاب المعالي والسعادة رؤساء وأعضاء الوفود، السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته. يسعدني أن أقف أمامكم ممثلاً لبلادي وأحمل رسالة ذلك المواطن الليبي المتألم الصبور وأنتقل تحياته لمنظمتنا الموقرة اليونسكو بعيدها السابعين. إن ليبيا بحمد المناسبة تؤكد على المبادئ السامية التي تأسست من أجلها هذه المنظمة بعد أن عانت المجتمعات الإنسانية ويلات الحروب والقهر والنزاعات والتشرذم، فيها نحن اليوم وبعد مضي سبعين عاماً من العمل الجاد لهذه المنظمة من إرساء أسس السلام والحمية المساواة. نرى أن عالمنا اليوم أصبح يشهد لوناً آخر من التخريب والدمار متمثلاً في ظهور جماعات الإرهاب الممنهج التي استهدفت روح الإنسان وعرقلت تقدمه الحضاري وحطمت إرثه التاريخي، إن ما يحدث في بلادي ليبيا بل في منطقتنا العربية من قتل وتشريد الأطفال والنساء وتحطيم الصروح التاريخية للإرث الإنساني الشاهدة على مدى التاريخ بمساهمة وطننا العربي في إرساء العلوم واحتضانه للحضارات الأولى مثل الحضارة السومرية والأشورية والبابلية والفرعونية والقرطاجية. وفي وطني العزيز ليبيا تجذرت فيه حضارة ما قبل التاريخ وازدهرت على سفوح جبال الحضارة الإغريقية وانطلقت منه الحضارة الرومانية لتعم مداخل أفريقيا وشواطئها الشمالية. كما كانت ليبيا ممراً آمناً للفاتحين الأوائل المبشرين بالدين الإسلامي الصحيح مرى الفاتحون من هناك فلم يهدموا ديراً ولا كنيسة ولا معبداً، ولم يحطموا تماثلاً ولا نصباً حتى رست سفنهم على شواطئ شبه الجزيرة الإيبيرية، حيث تأسست مدارس العمارة ومعاهد الفنون وترجمة العلوم الإغريقية التي كانت مرجعاً وأساساً للحضارة المعاصرة. كما شهدت شبه الجزيرة الإيبيرية في ذلك الوقت أرقى وأسمى مراحل التسامح بين الأديان السماوية الثلاث اليهودية والمسيحية والاسلام. فأين نحن اليوم من كل ذلك؟

فقد انتشرت بيننا الجماعات الإرهابية المستترة وراء ستار الدين وهي أبعد ما تكون عن الدين، وقد تغلفت قلوبهم بغلاف الحقد والكراهية، وشيدت في عقولهم صروح الظلام فعمدوا إلى ازهاق أرواح الأبرياء بغية إثارة الفتن بين الأمم وبين أبناء الوطن الواحد، وعبثوا بمعاولهم المعالم التراث الإنساني.

58.2 بهذه المناسبة أيها السادة الأفاضل، يسعدني مرة أخرى أن أعرب بالشكر مجدداً إلى السيدة المديرية العامة على الأهمية أعطتها للتراث الثقافي المهدهد في ليبيا والعراق وسوريا واليمن ولأضرحه مدينة تمبكتو بجمهورية مالي. كما أشكرها على التذكير والإشادة بدور العرب في إرساء العلوم المعاصرة، وعلى وقوفها بجانب الشعوب المظلومة وما وجود الرأية الفلسطينية أمام مبنى اليونسكو، واعتماد شعب جزيرة المنصورات، إلا شاهداً على ذلك ويا حيد لو تم في عهدها الميمون اعتماد عضوية كوسوفو، وهذا ما أوصاني به معالي السيد رئيس مجلس النواب السيد عقيلة صالح قويدر الذي سيكون بيننا هنا بعد أيام قلائل إنشاءً لله. وأنا أردت أن أصف هذه السيدة بشيء فلا أصفها بأنها المرأة الحديدية لأنها لست قاسية بل أقول لها بأنها السيدة التي لا يظلم عندها أحد.

58.3 أيها السيدات والسادة، إن احتفالنا بالعيد السبعين واعتمادنا لخطة التنمية المستدامة لسنة 2030 يعد من أولى اهتمامات الدولة الليبية، فليس أفضل من أن نتصدى للفقر بجميع أشكاله والقضاء على الجوع وضمان التعليم والصحة للجميع وتحقيق المساواة بين الجنسين والتصدي للتغيرات المناخية وحماية النظم الإيكولوجية وإقامة المجتمعات المسالمة وتنشيط الشراكة العالمية للوصول إلى التنمية المستدامة على أرض الواقع. ولكن قبل كل ذلك، يجب أن نتكاتف للتوطين السلام ونتأزر للتصدي لجماعات الموت والرعب والتطرف التي عرقلت المسيرة التعليمية في ليبيا بشكل فاضح، حيث تحولت رياض الأطفال والمدارس في بنغازي إلى ثكنات للمتطرفين، أما جامعة بنغازي فأصبحت ملاذاً للبوليم. وفي بنغازي أيضاً تضرب المسيرات السلمية بالقذائف الصاروخية، وفي مدينة القبة ضرب تجمع للشباب ليموت فيه أربعون شاباً دفعة واحدة.

58.4 أيها السيدات والسادة، إن ليبيا لم تنجو أيضاً حتى من الانتهازين الساعين إلى القفز على الكراسي والمروجين لمقولة إن ليبيا بها حكومتين لا بل إن ليبيا وشعبها وعلى رأسها السيد عقيلة صالح رئيس مجلس النواب أعطوا أروع مثلاً للحوار.

#### 59. The President:

Thank you very much, Your Excellency. Thank you very much. Ladies and gentlemen, your Excellencies, that statement concludes our speakers for the day. However, before adjourning the meeting, you will recall that this morning I, as President of the General Conference, in accordance with Rule 72 of the Rules of Procedure of the General Conference and with your agreement, agreed to grant Azerbaijan the right of reply to the statement that was delivered by Armenia. I now have the pleasure to call upon the distinguished representative of Azerbaijan to take the floor for two minutes only. Your Excellency, you have the floor.

#### 60.1 Azerbaijan:

Thank you, Mr President. I would like to use my right of reply to the statement the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia made this morning. The need for this reply is grounded on the statement which was full of false accusations, animosity and hatred against my country.

60.2 As you know, the occupation by Armenia of almost 20% of internationally recognized and historic territories of Azerbaijan continues for many years, regardless of four United Nations Security Council resolutions which demand immediate and unconditional withdrawal of Armenian troops from Azerbaijani territories.

60.3 More than 1 million Azerbaijanis became refugees and internally displaced as a result of this conflict. The speech is yet another attempt to mislead the international community from the aggravated facts of cultural cleansing carried out not only within the occupied Nagorno-Karabakh region of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the seven surrounding districts, but also within the territory of Armenia itself. The cultural heritage such as mosques, monuments, cemeteries, museums are being purposefully destroyed with only one aim - to wipe out the evidences of the historical presence of Azerbaijanis in these territories. Destruction of ancient mosques and the Aga-dede cemetery in the Masis region of Armenia is one of the many examples of such a policy. Such acts are directly violating norms and principles of international law including aims and principles of UNESCO. It was mentioned that one mosque is going to be preserved, but what about the hundreds of mosques destroyed in occupied territories of Azerbaijan?

60.4 As a nation suffering from several consequences of the occupation, the protection of cultural heritage is always significant and sensitive issue for Azerbaijan. Today, whereas Armenia is still a mono-ethnic and mono-religious State in a very ethnically and culturally diverse region, Azerbaijan continues to share its experience in religious and cultural tolerance with the international community through the implementation of concrete and efficient policy.

60.5 Ladies and gentlemen, in the end, we would like to share our confidence that UNESCO, as a genuine House of peace and tolerance, is not a place for emotional hatred and groundless accusations, and the valuable floor before us cannot be used for misleading the international community, but to call for just and fair solutions for a better and prosperous future. Thank you, Mr President.

#### 61. The President:

Thank you very much. Ladies and gentlemen, I had wanted to take Dr Anthony, the secretary-general of the Belize National Commission for UNESCO at his word to lead us in singing the rendition of the chorus "We are the World". Now I thought that we had a gentleman's agreement but it seems the gentleman's agreement expired before it could be delivered. So on that very sad note from your President, who is not good at singing, *the meeting is officially adjourned* until tomorrow at 10 o'clock. Thank you very much.

*The meeting rose at 6.20 p.m.*