

Ninth plenary meeting of the 38th session of the General Conference

Saturday 7 November 2015 at 10.15 a.m.

President: Mr Stanley Mutumba Simataa (Namibia)

General policy debate (*continued*)

1.1 The President

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, I believe we can set our journey in motion for this morning. I declare open the ninth plenary meeting of the General Conference which will be dedicated to the general policy debate. At the end of this morning's meeting, we will also hear the reports of the APX Commission on item 1.3 concerning the report by the Director-General on communications received from Member States invoking the provisions of Article 4.C, paragraph 8.c of the Constitution. Before we start with our list of speakers for the day, I wish to remind the distinguished delegates that each statement will be limited to six minutes and six minutes only, with the exception of non-governmental and intergovernmental organizations who will have three minutes to address the General Conference.

1.2 I now have the honour to call on our first speaker for this morning who has been patiently waiting for the President to set the meeting in motion, H.E. Mr Juraj Draxler, Minister of Education, Science, Research and Sport of Slovakia. Your Excellency you now have the floor.

2.1 Mr Draxler (Slovakia):

Mr President of the General Conference, Mr Chair of the Executive Board, Mr Assistant Director-General, distinguished delegates. At the outset, I wish to express Slovakia's alignment with the Statement of the European Union which will be delivered later this morning. It is a great honor for me to address this distinguished gathering, where so many interesting ideas and suggestions were raised throughout the past few days.

2.2 We should not miss the unique chance to reunite in the most crucial matters, while celebrating the 70th anniversary of UNESCO. Slovakia highly appreciates the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and recognizes the efforts of UNESCO in leading the preparatory processes for the Post-2015 education agenda. The new agenda, fundamental for educational, environmental, social and economic challenges and for the transformation of societies towards sustainable growth, is an important basis, which needs to become gradually implemented everywhere. In this context, we should not forget the less advantaged citizens of the world, and we should provide them with the conditions necessary for the same quality education and lifelong learning opportunities.

2.3 Slovakia is ready to take an active part in the implementation of the new programme. Many Slovak non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have been active for the past 20 years in areas outside of Europe, as well as the Slovak Aid Organization which has been active since 2003. Our development projects include education, rural development, agriculture and health services.

2.4 Slovakia, as a party to the 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, which marks its 10th anniversary this year, and a proud member of the committee, highlights the importance of its founding principles. The Slovak Republic strongly condemns the recent acts of deliberate destruction of cultural heritage in Syrian Arab Republic, Iraq, Yemen, Libya and elsewhere in the wider region, and has decided to make a substantial contribution to the fund for the protection of cultural property in the event of armed conflict. We also support the UNESCO call for solidarity "#Unite4Heritage" as an important signal not only to unite for a strong cause, but also to fight against unacceptable cultural purges by a strengthened promotion of cultural pluralism.

2.5 Distinguished colleagues, let me conclude my intervention by inviting all of us to rethink UNESCO by refreshing our thinking as to how we can start promoting UNESCO again with renewed drive and energy in our home countries. We have the experience, the tools and we have the responsibility. Let us make the next 70 years of UNESCO even more successful than its past. Thank you for your attention.

3. The President:

Thank you very much, Your Excellency, for the brevity of your statement. Now unfortunately it seems that I have run out of boxes of chocolates. I would have given you two. I will see what can be done. Thank you very much. Our next speaker is His Excellency Honourable Mr Shawn Richards, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Education of Saint Kitts and Nevis. Your Excellency, you have the floor.

4.1 Mr Richards (Saint Kitts and Nevis):

Mr President of the General Conference, Your Excellency, the Honorable Mr Stanley Simataa, President of the 38th session of the General Conference, Mr Chair of the Executive Board, esteemed Director-General, dear colleagues, fellow Honourable Ministers, distinguished Ambassadors, ladies and gentlemen, good morning. On behalf of the Government and people of St Kitts and Nevis, and on my own behalf as deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Education and UNESCO affairs, I wish to heartily congratulate UNESCO on the attainment of an important milestone in reaching 70 years of fruitful existence. My Government also wishes to express our gratitude to UNESCO for its overwhelming support to my country in providing expertise and assistance on the ground, notably in education, human science, information society and culture.

4.2 We live in a world where emerging crises arising from economic, environmental and sovereign state challenges continue to have an adverse impact on the quality of life of citizens who inhabit this earth. By any measure, UNESCO has successfully weathered the impact of these storms over the years in delivering its mandate to its Member States, especially in the field of education for all (EFA), and, importantly, at all levels. In speaking from the perspective as part of a group of small island developing States (SIDS), faced with immense vulnerabilities, and external economic and climatic

challenges to our open-market island economies, our continued survival in a world of rapid upheaval and transformation requires continued, structured intervention and expertise by UNESCO, and especially at this time.

4.3 Earlier this year, I had the honour to attend and actively participate in the 2015 World Education Forum in Incheon, Korea, in order to contribute to the 2030 education agenda. My Government remains more convinced than ever that quality education at all levels holds the key to alleviate poverty and boost sustainable growth, especially in the context of SIDS, which includes my own country. We urge UNESCO to give special emphasis to technical and vocational education and training (TVET) and skills development programmes as a critical priority, especially taking account of the high dropout rate of our young males, and the concomitant consequences of youth violence. We endorse the strong emphasis on the need for moral values, attitudes and behaviours conducive to a culture of peace and non-violence, respecting cultural diversity and human rights, with youth at the centre of this philosophy.

4.4 We must be able to unleash and discover the full potential and immense talent that lies within our young people in more innovative and creative ways. On this account, I encourage the ethical use of the Internet and other information and communication technologies (ICTs) as a means for enhancing education and training among the student population. Our cultural heritage and its role in boosting tourism, considering our rich and vibrant history and legacy, must be deployed in a more professional manner as a means of adding value to the tourism sector. This is why my Government will be shortly ratifying two additional UNESCO cultural conventions. My delegation applauds UNESCO for its work on the draft action plan for small island developing States. We are confident that this work will help us to achieve our national and global agenda, and the ensuing sustainable use of our human and natural resources. I thank you.

5. **Mr President:**

Thank you very much, Your Excellency. Our next speaker is His Excellency Mr Nesmy Manigat, Minister of Education and Vocational Training of Haiti.

6.1 **M. Manigat (Haïti) :**

Monsieur le Président de la Conférence générale, Monsieur le Président du Conseil exécutif, chers collègues, distingués délégués, Mesdames, Messieurs, c'est pour moi un grand honneur de pouvoir m'adresser, au nom de la République d'Haïti, à cette auguste Assemblée pour réaffirmer l'engagement et l'attachement de mon pays aux valeurs et idéaux fondateurs de l'UNESCO à l'occasion de son 70^e anniversaire.

6.2 Je voudrais tout d'abord vous présenter les félicitations d'Haïti pour votre élection à la présidence de la Conférence générale. Je vous souhaite plein succès dans la direction des travaux de cette 38^e session. Je voudrais également féliciter la Directrice générale, le Président du Conseil exécutif ainsi que les membres de cet Organe pour l'immense travail accompli au cours de ces deux dernières années.

6.3 Mesdames, Messieurs, avec la montée des intolérances, les problèmes continus d'inégalités sociales, les problèmes de migration, les crimes contre le patrimoine culturel mondial, les idéaux de l'UNESCO n'ont rien perdu de leur actualité et de leur pertinence après 70 années d'action. Les défis sont encore là et nous devons rester constamment vigilants pour la sauvegarde de nos valeurs. Défendre et promouvoir le dialogue, la tolérance, le respect et la valorisation des différences, le sens du partage et de la solidarité devraient être notre leitmotiv en vue de construire ce monde, un meilleur monde pour les générations futures. Comme on l'affirme dans le cadre de notre campagne d'éducation nationale en Haïti à la citoyenneté – dans ma langue maternelle – « Nou tout sanble menm lè nou diferan », « Nous sommes tous semblables au-delà de nos différences ».

6.4 Voilà pourquoi il nous faut renforcer la capacité de notre Organisation pour qu'elle continue à contribuer au maintien de la paix et de la sécurité en resserrant les liens entre les nations, en influençant le quotidien de chaque citoyen, qu'il soit acteur du changement, acteur de son devenir. Dans cette perspective, chaque État membre doit donner plus d'importance aux idéaux et programmes de l'UNESCO, aux Objectifs de développement durable et travailler à leur mise en pratique. À cet effet, Haïti prend pleinement l'engagement de jouer son rôle au sein de la communauté internationale. Au niveau national, le renouvellement des institutions démocratiques en cours augure de bonnes perspectives pour la mise en œuvre des ODD.

6.5 Déjà, le Gouvernement haïtien s'est engagé à permettre à chaque enfant d'avoir accès de manière équitable à une éducation de qualité. Dans cette optique, les actions du gouvernement ont permis de parvenir à un taux net de scolarisation de 46 %. Aujourd'hui, environ 4 % de notre PIB est investi dans l'éducation contre 2 % il y a 10 ans. Un ensemble de 12 mesures a été pris, une vaste réforme séculaire curriculaire est lancée, le secondaire est en cours de rénovation, le préscolaire réorganisé, un plan de formation des maîtres en actualisation, un registre des maîtres devant donner accès à un permis d'enseigner. En plus de ces actions, une mobilisation citoyenne est lancée à travers un Pacte national pour une éducation de qualité afin que tous les gouvernements, la société civile, s'engagent dans cette dynamique de rénovation du système éducatif. Il s'agit de doter le secteur de moyens à la hauteur de ses ambitions en doublant notamment le budget et en consacrant 8 % du PIB à l'éducation. Des actions sont aussi engagées pour le renforcement du secteur de la formation professionnelle afin d'offrir d'autres opportunités aux jeunes et de favoriser leur employabilité.

6.6 Un autre programme de l'UNESCO important pour mon pays est le programme international sur l'Homme et la biosphère. Après avoir déclaré sa première biosphère en 2012, la République d'Haïti vient de soumettre une deuxième réserve. Je profite donc de cette tribune pour encourager l'UNESCO à renforcer tous ses programmes de sciences, incluant son apport Haïti.

6.7 En ce qui concerne le programme culture, Haïti met en œuvre la convention à travers le renforcement des capacités des institutions concernées et l'inventaire des éléments du patrimoine en vue de leur appropriation par les communautés locales et de leur conservation et de leur transmission aux jeunes générations. Fort de cela, je renouvelle, au nom du peuple haïtien, au nom de mon Gouvernement, au nom de la communauté éducative et de tous les

enseignants, mes remerciements à l'UNESCO, en particulier aux membres de son équipe en Haïti et à tous ses partenaires pour leur appui continu.

6.8 Mesdames, Messieurs, en 70 ans, l'UNESCO a fait son travail de réflexion transdisciplinaire prospective et préventive. Mais les défis sont tels qu'il nous faut constamment nous remettre au travail, atteindre l'homme/la femme ordinaire dans son quotidien et faire de lui/d'elle un instrument de paix, un instrument de liberté, d'égalité et de fraternité. Continuons la mobilisation afin de permettre à l'UNESCO de disposer de davantage de ressources pour la mise en œuvre des Objectifs de développement durable. Merci de votre attention.

7. **Mr President:**

Thank you very much, Your Excellency. Our next speaker is Her Excellency Honorable Ms Fatou Lamin Faye, Minister of Basic and Secondary Education of Gambia. Your Excellency, you now have the floor.

8.1 **Ms Faye (Gambia):**

Bismillâh ar-Rahmân, ar-Rahîm. Your Excellency Mr President of the General Conference, Madam Director-General, Excellencies, Mr Chair and Members of the Executive Board, Permanent Delegates, distinguished ladies and gentlemen. Let me first and foremost congratulate His Excellency, Stanley Mutumba Simataa on his election to the Presidency of the 38th session of the General Conference, and by the same token thank his immediate predecessor, His Excellency, Mr Hao Ping, for the successful conduct of the 37th session held in 2013. As a Member State of UNESCO, Gambia continues to support the promotion of the ideals upon which this Organization was founded and the prominence given to its fields of competence for which I am exceedingly pleased to share our country's impressions with this session.

8.2 On education, Gambia heartily recognizes the leadership role UNESCO has played in the preparatory, consultative and finalization processes of the post-2015 education agenda culminating in a framework for action that will guide the implementation of our future education endeavours in education. Accordingly, Gambia has concluded recently a national education conference aimed at formulating a sector-wide education policy for the period 2016-2030 with a clear focus on the provision of inclusive and equitable quality education and training from early childhood development to university education for sustainable development.

8.3 On natural sciences, Gambia is appreciative of UNESCO's global initiative in convening the Second Ministerial Forum on Science, Technology and Innovation coupled with the important place that science has been accorded in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) on the oceans, freshwater and biodiversity. It is therefore no coincidence that UNESCO provided support to Gambia to finalize its science, technology and innovation (STI) policy.

8.4 On the social and human sciences, Gambia applauds UNESCO on the first phase of consolidating the integration of social transformations, foresight and intercultural dialogue. Gambia would like to put on record its sincere appreciation of this successful organization in Baku of the first global forum on youth policy in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme giving the potential for enhanced intercultural dialogue and social transformations of this laudable initiative. Through the 2014-2015 UNESCO Participation Programme, Gambia has received funding to accelerate youth governance with emphasis on improving the effectiveness of the implementation of the national youth policy. In the area of gender, the Government of Gambia has made encouraging advancements in the formulation and implementation of the gender equality and women's empowerment policy of 2010-2020 and has enacted and is enforcing the Women's Act of 2010, the Domestic Violence Act and the Sexual Offences Act, both of 2013.

8.5 Gambia salutes UNESCO for the progress registered in the implementation of the culture conventions; notably the priority focus on statutory meetings, the developed responses to emerging crisis situations, and the substantial work being undertaken to ensure the recognition of culture in the post-2015 development agenda. In accordance with the 2003 and 2005 conventions, the cultural sector in Gambia has continued to gain momentum. The new management plan (2014-2018) for the world heritage site of Kunta Kinteh Island and related sites has been finalized with support provided by the World Heritage Fund.

8.6 Under the 2014-2015 Participation Programme, the sector received funding to train 25 young Gambians, including women, on motion pictures arts certificate (MPAC) in the various specializations of cinematography, script writing and directing. This intervention is expected to change the lives of these graduates significantly through the self-employment opportunities it provides.

8.7 On communication and information, Gambia is satisfied with the actions taken thus far relative to freedom of expression, media development, and building knowledge societies through information and communication technology (ICT). The Government of the Gambia knows the challenges of our national and international telecommunications connectivity infrastructure and realizes the need to overhaul the national communication infrastructure to keep up with the progressive advancement of information and communication technologies. In this regard, steps were taken to address the challenges and assure that Gambia can now boast of connectivity to the global information superhighway through its own submarine cable landing station. This high bandwidth cable is being exploited by the roll-out of national transmission through fibre-optic cable country-wide and fully supported by the next-generation networks to foster an all-inclusive broadband development programme.

8.8 In conclusion, Gambia wishes to recognize the efforts of UNESCO over the past 70 years towards the realization of peace and sustainable development in the Member States. To this end, I am pleased to reaffirm Gambia's continued resolve to promote and uphold the principles and ideals of this great Organization to which our country proudly belongs. I thank you all for your kind attention.

9. **The President:**

Thank you very much, Your Excellency. Our next speaker is Her Excellency Ms Souad Abdelrazig Saeed, Minister of Education of Sudan. Your Excellency, you have the floor.

10.1 السيدة سعيد (السودان) :

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم، السيد رئيس المؤتمر، السيد رئيس المجلس التنفيذي، السعادة أصحاب المعالي الوزراء والرؤساء وأعضاء الوفود، السيدة إيرينا بوكوفا المديرية العام، السادة والسيدة السلام عليكم ورحمة الله تعالى وبركاته. اسمح لي أن أقدم لكم بالتهنئة على انتخابكم بالإجماع رئيساً للمؤتمر العام في دورة هذه. كما نتقدم بالتهنئة لسلفكم هاو بينغ الذي أدار الدورة أعمال الدورة السابقة باقتدار وحكمة وصبر. ولا بد لي هنا من إرجاء الشكر والتقدير لرئيس المجلس التنفيذي ولكافة الزملاء والزميلات المنتخبين كما أرجو أن تسمح لي بالتقدم نيابة عن وفد بلادي بالشكر والتقدير للسيدة إيرينا بوكوفا المديرية العامة لمنظمة اليونسكو لما ظلت تبذله من جهود مضيئة مع فريق عملها لاستنباط الوسائل كافة لتعزيز دور المنظمة في بناء مجتمع العلم والسلم والوثام الاجتماعي. وباسم حكومة السودان نتمنى نجاح مداورات هذه الدورة المهمة من مؤتمر العام، والذي تأتي تزامناً مع العيد السبعين للمنظمة.

10.2 حيث شاركت السودان في النقاش والتشاور الذي بادرت به المنظمة مع دول الأعضاء ابتداءً من مسقط وانتهاً بإنشوان لتحديد هدف التعليم للجميع ألا وهو ضمان تعليم الجيد المنصف وشامل للجميع وتعزيز فرصة تعليم مدى الحياة. ضمن أهداف التنمية المستدامة لما بعد 2015 ونؤكد بأن السودان قد اعتمد ما توصلنا إليه في خطته العامة للتعليم. إن أهم العقبات التي تقف في طريق مسيرتنا التربوية والعلمية والثقافية تتمثل في العقوبات الاقتصادية القسرية الأحادية التي تعيق تنفيذ كل خططنا الرامية لتحقيق تلك الأهداف السامية. كانت بلادي تتطلع عقب تنفيذ اتفاقية السلام الشامل 2005، وعقب تنفيذ اتفاقية سلام في الدوحة 2011، في أن يولي المجتمع الدولي عناية خاصة للقضايا الاقتصادية والاجتماعية والثقافية في السودان كما كنا نتطلع أيضاً لاستئناف العون التنموي، والدعم المؤسسي لبلادنا أسوةً ببعض الدول التي خرجت من النزاعات. إن قناعة بلادي بأن التعليم هو محور التنمية البشرية أحد أهم أولوياتها والعمل في زيادة مؤشرات التعليم في السودان حيث زيادة فرص التعليم وتحسين جودته، زيادة نسب الاستيعاب في التعليم الأساس والثانوي، إيلاء عناية خاصة لتعليم البنات والفتيات لتحقيق المساواة من الجنسين، توفير الدعم اللازم من الحكومة ومن الشراكة المجتمعية ومن الشراكة الدولية في مجال التربية مثال GPE ومنظمة اليونسكو وبعض المنظمات. وتوسيع استخدام معال العلوم الصغيرة في المدارس الثانوية، والتوسع الرأسي والأفقي في التعليم العالي. يقدر السودان الدور الذي ظلت تضطلع به منظمة اليونسكو في مجال العلوم الطبيعية في السودان فقد كان لها الفضل في تجديد سياسة العلوم والتكنولوجيا والابتكار من خلال الاستجابة لمبادرة رئيس الجمهورية والتي أكد عليها بإنشاء مركز لليونسكو الإقليمي لتنمية القدرات والبحوث في حصاد المياه من الفئة الثانية يتوافق مع استراتيجيتنا في الحفاظ على هذا المورد الحيوي.

10.3 تولي بلادي أهمية خاصة لتشجيع التفكير العلمي لتحليل وتحديد التحديات الراهنة من أجل تعبئة المعارف والقدرات التي تنطوي عليها العلوم الاجتماعية لتمكين المرأة والشباب باعتبارها عنصرين رئيسيين في التنمية المستدامة وتحقيق التنمية الوطنية والاجتماعية والسلام والمشاركة في الجهود الرامية للتصدي لتعاطي المنشطات والمخدرات والنهوض بواقع التعدد الثقافي والاجتماعي. ولتوظيف القيم الإنسانية النبيلة من أجل الحوار التعايش والتسامح والتواصل. ونسعى لنشر الوعي بالجوانب الأخلاقية للتقدم العلمي في الميادين الحديثة علوم الاحياء وتقنيات البيولوجية وذلك من أجل تحديد آثارها الأخلاقية والقانونية والاجتماعية وبناء الجسور وتعزيز العلاقة بين الباحثين وواضعي السياسات والاستفادة من الفرص المتاحة لإقامة الشراكات، ونوه هنا بالدور الذي يقوم به كرسي اليونسكو لأخلاقيات البيولوجية الذي يتبع لجامعة الخرطوم. والسودان الذي يقدر دور اليونسكو في بناء وتنمية القدرات في مجال تكنولوجيا المعلومات والاتصالات ووسائل الاعلام التابعة والمجمعات المحلية والانتفاع الحر بالمعلومات وسد الفجوة الرقمية لتمكين المجتمعات من استغلال انتاجها وترويج لثرائها.

10.4 يتميز السودان بمساحته الواسعة وتتنوع ثقافات مجتمعه المحلية ويذخر بتراث غير مادي غني ومتنوع في كثير من مناحي الحياة. نقدر المساعدة الدولية من اليونسكو والتي حصل عليها السودان في حصر وتوثيق التراث الثقافي غير المادي في جنوب كردفان والنيل الأزرق. إن السودان لا شك أنه يعد من بين أقطار العالم التي تزدخر بالآثار والمواقع الأثرية والتاريخية المتمثلة في الأهرامات والمدافن والإرث الإسلامي والمسيحي والحضارات النوبية القديمة التي عرفها الانسان والتي قامت على ضفاف النيل وقد تم إدراج بعضها في السجل العالمي للتراث كجبل البركل واهرامات مروي والنقعة والمصورات وبعضها في طريقه للتسجيل كجزيرة سنجنين في البحر الأحمر وفي هذا السياق اسمحوا لي أن أقدم لكم بالشكر والتقدير الخاص لدولة قطر الشقيقة لجهودها المتواصلة في الاهتمام بالآثار النوبية بالسودان وبالتعاون مع اليونسكو.

10.5 سيدي الرئيس، السادة والسيدات نتمنى لمؤتمركم هذا النجاح في تعزيز سعي جميع دول الأعضاء للارتقاء بالأهداف لاسامية للمنظمة في بناء مجتمع العلم والثقافة والمعرفة والسلام، والسلام عليكم ورحمة الله تعالى وبركاته.

11. The President:

Thank you very much, Your Excellency. Our next speaker is His Excellency, Mr Ashraf Mohamed El-Shihy, Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research of Egypt. Your Excellency, you have the floor.

12.1 السيد الشيخ (مصر) :

أصحاب السعادة، السيد رئيس المؤتمر العام، السيد رئيس المجلس التنفيذي، السيدة المديرية العامة، السيدات والسادة، معالي الوزراء ورؤساء الوفود وممثلي الدول الأعضاء، أسمحوا لي في مستهل كلمتي أن أقدم بخالص التهنئة لسعادة السيد/ ستانلي موتوما سيمانا نائب وزير الاتصالات وتكنولوجيا المعلومات بدولة ناميبيا لانتخابه رئيساً للدورة الثامنة والثلاثين للمؤتمر العام لليونسكو، مع تمنياتنا لسيدته بالتوفيق في أداء مهمته الجديدة. كما أقدم بخالص شكري وامتناني للسيد/ هاو بنغ رئيس المؤتمر العام خلال دورته السابقة على جهوده المتميزة، ولا يفوتني في هذا المقام أن أحبي الاستاذ الدكتور/محمد سامح عمرو رئيس المجلس التنفيذي على حسن ادارته طوال رئاسته للمجلس التنفيذي للعامين الماضيين. كذلك أود باسم بلدي مصر أن أتوجه بخالص الشكر إلى السيدة/ إيرينا بوكوفا على ما تقوم به من جهد من أجل تعزيز دور منظمة اليونسكو، وتطويرها، وإعادة هيكلة أنشطتها وتحقيق أهدافها الإنمائية في ظل الأزمة المالية التي مازالت تلقي بظلالها على المنظمة.

12.2 سيدي الرئيس، السيدات والسادة، مع اعتماد أجدنة التنمية المستدامة 2030، ومجموعة الأهداف العالمية الجريئة، يتطلع العالم وكله أمل إلى غد أفضل يتم فيه احتواء التوترات والنزاعات الإقليمية المعلقة، التي لم تتم تسويتها بطريقة عادلة ومتوازنة، وتُعزز فيه منهجية العمل متعدد الأطراف واحترام الشرعية الدولية وحقوق الانسان واحترام ثقافة الآخر وكفالة حرية الرأي والتعبير وضمان المساواة بين الأجناس. على اليونسكو هذه المنظمة العريقة في عيدها السبعين أن تستفيد من المناخ الإيجابي الذي نعيشه للعمل على تفعيل دورها الرائد في صون التراث الانساني، وتنشيط الحوار بين مختلف الأطراف.

12.3 السيدات والسادة، أن مصر اليوم تنهض بقوة للعمل على إرساء قواعد الديمقراطية وتعمل على احترامها، فها نحن قربنا من الانتهاء من خريطة الطريق التي بدأنا العمل على تنفيذها منذ 2013، ويصاحب ذلك جهد كبير تبذله الدولة من أجل تحقيق التنمية المستدامة لشعب يسعى للبناء والتقدم وتحقيق الرخاء، شعب يسابق الزمن من أجل تحقيق حلمه في بناء مستقبل أفضل للأجيال القادمة، ويناضل في ذات الوقت من أجل محاربة الإرهاب ودحره. لقد ساهمت مصر بفاعلية في صياغة الأهداف التنموية حتى عام 2030، من أجل النهوض بأوضاع العديد من الدول والشعوب التي تتطلع إلى تحقيق التنمية المستدامة. والتزاماً منها بتنفيذ هذه الأهداف وفقاً لأولوياتها الوطنية ورؤيتها فقد تم وضع استراتيجية مصرية للتنمية المستدامة حتى عام 2030 بالتعاون مع منظمات المجتمع المدني، تعكس آراء وآمال وطموحات مختلف فئات المجتمع، وتسم بالديمقراطية والتوازن والمشاركة في صنع واتخاذ القرار، أولت فيها اهتماما خاصا للعديد

من القضايا المحورية مثل تمكين المرأة التي تمثل نصف المجتمع وكذلك تمكين الشباب والاستفادة بحماسة وتحويله إلى طاقة إيجابية بناءً باعتبارهم يمثلون قادة المستقبل.

12.4 إن موضوع التغيرات المناخية يأتي على رأس اهتمامات مصر، وفي ضوء رئاسة مصر الدورية للجنة رؤساء الدول والحكومات الإفريقية المعنية بتغير المناخ، وما أنجزته مصر في هذا الملف خلال الفترة الماضية ورؤيتها، فمن المنتظر أن يكون الموقف الأفريقي قوياً ومؤثراً في «قمة تغير المناخ» المرتقبة في باريس. إن الحكومة تعمل على تطوير المناهج وإصلاح العملية التعليمية مع الاهتمام بالأنشطة التربوية وتطوير التعليم من خلال تدريب المدرسين بشكل مستمر. وتستند خطة مصر للارتقاء بالتعليم على ثلاث ركائز أساسية وهي "الجودة وإدارة النظام التعليمي والإتاحة" إيماناً منا بأنه ليس هناك اقتصاد قوى بدون منظومة تعليمية قوية، وأن التعليم والبحث العلمي في أي دولة هو المحرك الرئيسي للتنمية الاقتصادية والاجتماعية.

12.5 وإذ ننتهز هذه الفرصة لنعبر عن تقديرنا لجهود المنظمة تجاه مصر حيث حرصت المنظمة منذ انشائها على تقديم كافة سبل الدعم مثل المساعدة في نقل معابد أبو سمبل بالنوبة بصعيد مصر والتي تعد من أهم ركائز التراث الإنساني والعالمي ومروراً بمشروع احياء مكتبة الاسكندرية، وقد تواصل التعاون خلال العامين الماضيين في مجال التعليم وتطويره، والمساعدة في تنفيذ خطة تطوير التعليم في مصر وتقديم سبل المساعدة لحماية مواقع الآثار والتراث ذا القيمة العالمية في مصر. ولا يسعنا إزاء كل ذلك إلا أن نقدم جزيل الشكر إلى السيدة المديرية العامة والسكرتارية على كل ما قدموه، وبجدونا الأمل في أن يستمر هذا التعاون المثمر. إن على اليونسكو أن تتخذ كافة الخطوات والإجراءات اللازمة لحماية المقدسات الدينية والمواقع الأثرية الموجودة بمدينة القدس، ونرجو أن يتم تفعيل قرارات المجلس التنفيذي الخاصة بقيام بعثة فنية لزيارة مدينة القدس، وتقديم تقرير إلى المجلس التنفيذي خلال دورته القادمة.

12.6 ختاماً، فإن مصر التي كان لها شرف المشاركة في صياغة الافكار والمبادئ التي عكسها الآباء المؤسسون في ميثاق اليونسكو، تجدد التزامها غير المحدود بالعمل على تحقيق أهداف المنظمة بما يحقق السلام والتنمية لشعوب العالم. والسلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته.

13. **The President:**

Thank you very much, Your Excellency. Our next speaker is His Excellency Mr Philneas Magagula, Minister of Education and Training of Swaziland. Your Excellency, you have the floor.

14.1 **Mr Magagula (Swaziland):**

Mr President, kindly allow me on behalf of the Kingdom of Swaziland to warmly and heartily congratulate you for being elected to the Presidency of this session. Let me reaffirm and reassure you of Swaziland's unwavering commitment and support in your new and demanding duties. The Government of the Kingdom of Swaziland would like to pay its tribute and appreciation to UNESCO for the enormous support afforded the country for the past 37 years. The last biennium is no exception as we continued to receive great support from UNESCO, as will be highlighted in this statement.

14.2 We pay our tribute to UNESCO for continuing to support the country through the Participation Programme. The support extended through the programme contributes to the development of the country and has assisted in the development of critical national policies. This support has also contributed to the visibility of UNESCO in Swaziland and we advocate that this programme is sustained and strengthened.

14.3 Swaziland is elated to be among the countries that have participated and contributed to the Education 2030 Framework for Action and pledges to put efforts in the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Swaziland subscribes to goal 4 of the SDGs which stresses inclusive and equitable quality education and promotion of lifelong learning opportunity for all. Indeed, Swaziland has placed quality high on its agenda for education. The support of UNESCO, through the UNESCO International Bureau of Education (IBE), to analyse the quality of education in the country in a bid to improve the quality, is highly valued.

14.4 Swaziland has recognized more than ever that there is need to put more effort in proper technical and vocational education and training (TVET) provision, which has been recognized as critical for enhancing the gains of education as a sustainable developmental tool. Hence, we applaud UNESCO's support for the development of national policies to enhance effective TVET provision among our nations and support the inclusion of TVET in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

14.5 Swaziland strongly applauds support for the preservation of tangible and intangible cultural heritage and the promotion of the diversity of cultural expressions. Swaziland is a country that is rich in culture and aims to preserve and promote it. UNESCO's support, both technical and financial, has contributed enormously to this goal. One has to highlight the fact that with UNESCO's support, for the first time in the national multiple indicator cluster survey (MICS), culture-related indicators were included. These indicators show how culture through social participation can contribute to the development of the country.

14.6 We urge UNESCO to continue support for the advancement of science and technology, especially in relation to policy. Swaziland has benefited from UNESCO support in the development of the national science, technology and innovation (STI) policy, and the science, mathematics and technology education policy. The existence of these policies has paved a way forward for the advancement of science and technology in the country.

14.7 Last but not least, Swaziland would like to extend its special appreciation to the Director and staff of the Regional Office for Southern Africa for the support extended to the National Commission for UNESCO in Swaziland. With their support and guidance, the National Commission has been able to effectively carry out activities related to the mandate of UNESCO with more focus and direction. This has had a great impact in increasing the visibility of UNESCO in the Kingdom, within the Government sectors, civil society and even at grass-roots level. Above all, this has contributed to the welfare and development of the Swazi people. On behalf of the Kingdom of Swaziland, I pledge our continued support and commitment to UNESCO and its mandate. I thank you.

15. **The President:**

Thank you very much, Your Excellency. Our next speaker is Her Excellency Ms Mirela Kumbaro, Minister of Culture of Albania. Your Excellency, you have the floor.

16.1 **Mme Kumbaro** (Albanie) :

Monsieur le Président, Excellences, Mesdames et Messieurs, je suis honorée de m'adresser à vous aujourd'hui au nom de l'Albanie. Permettez-moi, Monsieur le Président, de vous féliciter pour votre élection et pour présider cette Conférence si importante.

16.2 Personne ne peut se passer de la culture. La seule limite, c'est notre volonté. Mon pays, l'Albanie, fier d'être membre de la famille de l'UNESCO, a fait preuve d'une ferme volonté pour respecter et poursuivre notre objectif commun dans la sauvegarde des cultures et le développement de l'éducation. À cette occasion, je voudrais remercier sincèrement le Centre du patrimoine mondial, non seulement pour avoir accompagné nos institutions dans les efforts de la sauvegarde du patrimoine, mais aussi pour avoir favorablement accueilli les efforts entrepris par l'État albanais afin de répondre aux recommandations du Centre. C'est l'occasion de souligner à quel point cette coopération est utile à chacun des pays membres de l'UNESCO car sa philosophie, ses méthodes de travail, ses objectifs sont universels.

16.3 Permettez-moi maintenant d'attirer, notamment à ce propos, votre attention sur la demande d'adhésion du Kosovo à l'UNESCO. En décidant de recommander à la Conférence générale de l'UNESCO l'adhésion du Kosovo, suite à une résolution proposée par l'Albanie, le Conseil exécutif de l'UNESCO a été dans son rôle institutionnel. Excellences, Mesdames et Messieurs, le Kosovo – reconnu par 111 États membres des Nations Unies et membre de plusieurs organisations internationales – est déjà une réalité géopolitique en Europe du Sud-Est. Fortement attaché aux principes de démocratie, de défense des droits de l'homme et d'État de droit, le Kosovo ne cesse d'affirmer son aspiration européenne. Il vient de le prouver, notamment en signant, à Strasbourg, l'Accord de stabilisation et d'association avec l'Union européenne. Dans leur approche vis-à-vis du patrimoine culturel, les autorités kosovares ont fait preuve de responsabilité institutionnelle et culturelle, et les élites du Kosovo aussi. L'Église orthodoxe serbe est reconnue au Kosovo, et son identité et ses droits sont protégés par la Constitution et d'autres lois. Les sites de l'UNESCO et tous les sites du patrimoine culturel sont sûrs et visités par des milliers de touristes chaque année car ils sont protégés par un cadre juridique consolidé et moderne adopté par le Kosovo et, en grande partie, parrainé par la communauté internationale présente au Kosovo. La grande majorité des objets endommagés par les émeutes de 2004 sont aujourd'hui restaurés et reconstruits avec les finances du Gouvernement du Kosovo et de ses partenaires internationaux.

16.4 Mesdames et Messieurs, depuis l'aube de la civilisation balkanique, le patrimoine culturel au Kosovo a été le socle commun d'hommes et de femmes qui ont tout partagé des siècles durant. Un conflit et les animosités d'une génération, voire deux, ne peuvent pas changer ce que la terre contient dans sa matrice culturelle et historique. Ce n'est pas tout simplement une question d'adhésion à l'UNESCO. Tout est question d'émancipation de société – de toutes nos sociétés – et d'ouverture d'esprit surtout. L'adhésion du Kosovo à l'UNESCO est non seulement nécessaire mais aussi bien méritoire. Le Kosovo, par son histoire, ses habitants, ses monuments et sa culture a sauvegardé une partie de la mosaïque culturelle des Balkans. Tous les autres États de la région – tous les autres pays des Balkans – sont membres de l'UNESCO et il ne serait pas logique qu'un membre de la famille balkanique ne soit pas formellement à l'intérieur de l'organisation la plus importante en matière de culture et d'éducation, alors que le Kosovo en fait déjà partie par son lien organique et historique.

16.5 La culture ne connaît pas de frontières administratives. La culture ne se protège pas par l'exclusion de l'Autre. Au contraire, elle s'enrichit par l'échange et l'inclusion. C'est l'essence même de l'existence de l'UNESCO. Par l'adhésion du Kosovo à l'UNESCO, ce n'est pas seulement ce pays qui en profite, mais ce sont également ses voisins, la Serbie, l'Albanie, la Macédoine et le Monténégro qui y gagnent autant. On ne pourra pas protéger et promouvoir sa propre culture, son patrimoine culturel sans protéger et promouvoir ceux des voisins, ceux de l'Autre. Sous le contrôle et l'assistance de l'Organisation, le pays devra veiller avec une attention toute particulière sur un patrimoine matériel et immatériel, y compris les monuments déjà inscrits dans la Liste du patrimoine mondial. Loin de menacer ce patrimoine essentiel à la mémoire des Serbes du Kosovo, l'adhésion du pays à l'UNESCO créera en fait des conditions et des garanties supplémentaires pour sa protection.

16.6 Mesdames et Messieurs, il est grand temps que les Balkans, qui ont longtemps porté le cliché de la « poudrière de l'Europe », deviennent aujourd'hui « un tonneau de culture » en Europe. Nous exhortons, en outre, nos amis serbes à saisir cette opportunité pour faire preuve d'un esprit de coopération et de loyauté par rapport aux engagements pris, lesquels l'invitent à regarder vers un avenir européen auquel Serbes et Albanais se doivent d'accéder ensemble. C'est le sens même de l'Histoire et ce sera, à n'en pas douter, l'énième discrète victoire de la Culture. Merci.

17. **The President:**

Thank you very much, Your Excellency. Our next speaker is His Excellency, Mr Jose Antonio Zepeda Lopez, Member of Parliament of Nicaragua. Your Excellency, you have the floor.

18.1 **Sr. Zepeda** (Nicaragua):

Permítanme iniciar esta intervención recordando a nuestro fundador y padre de la revolución popular sandinista, comandante Carlos Fonseca Amador, quien en una fecha como hoy pasó a la inmortalidad, dejándonos el legado de garantizar el derecho a la educación, la cultura y el bienestar, ya que desde tiempos de la dura lucha contra la dictadura orientó que no sólo era importante enseñar el uso de armas sino que era necesario enseñar a leer a las y los campesinos en la lucha por liberar a nuestro pueblo y asegurar el progreso y la paz. Hemos escuchado con mucha atención las diferentes intervenciones de las y los representantes de los gobiernos y ha sido unánime el deseo e interés por la formación e incorporación de las y los maestros en los procesos de cambios educativos. Por lo que consideramos importante para nuestra región que se fortalezca y mantenga el Instituto Internacional de la UNESCO para la Educación Superior en América Latina y el Caribe (IESALC). De igual manera considera que debe mantenerse y fortalecerse el sector de las Ciencias Sociales, en particular el programa MOST, a fin de continuar compartiendo experiencias y mejores prácticas en la integración de nuestras sociedades. Saludamos la iniciativa para que las escuelas en zonas en conflicto sean protegidas y preservadas. Nicaragua en su profundo compromiso con la paz y el bienestar de los pueblos del mundo lamenta la destrucción y pillaje de nuestro patrimonio material e inmaterial en las zonas ocupadas y en

conflicto. ¡No es posible que se continúe con la ocupación ilegal de Palestina, esta debe terminar! ¡La barbarie y el terrorismo, en todas sus expresiones, deben ser detenidos!

18.2 Señor Presidente, hoy, me dirijo a ustedes como educador y dirigente sindical, presidiendo nuestra delegación como expresión práctica de la política de nuestro presidente de resaltar el diálogo, el consenso y el protagonismo como instrumento de representación y solución de los problemas del Gobierno de Reconciliación y Unidad Nacional que preside el Presidente Comandante Daniel Ortega y la Compañera Rosario Murillo Coordinadora de Comunicación y Ciudadanía de Nicaragua. Nuestro gobierno asume y hace suyo el Marco de Acción Educación 2030, el cual es un marco para desarrollar y cumplir los compromisos de restitución del derecho a la escuela pública gratuita y de calidad. Las rutas educativas fijadas para el desarrollo de las personas, se centran en la formación y prácticas de valores, sustentadas en nuestras tradiciones, cultura y costumbres, una educación humanística que gira alrededor de fortalecer la familia como eje fundamental de la sociedad. Señor Presidente, nos falta mucho que construir, las políticas son ajustadas conforme a los retos y desafíos pero se avanza con paso firme, construyendo alternativa para nuestro desarrollo, los programas educativos como la secundaria rural, las escuelas de oficios, el fortalecimiento de la educación técnica, la transformación metodológica del primer grado así como la incorporación de la educación preescolar en las zonas rurales, la atención de la educación especial, la educación para jóvenes y adultos son, entre otras, acciones que facilitan la inclusión al ejercicio del derecho a la educación de nuestro pueblo. La formación y práctica de valores basados en el amor y respeto son base para construir personas conscientes de aceptar las diferencias existentes y luchar por hacer la equidad de un mundo mejor, un mundo sustentado en respetar la vida, erradicar la pobreza y el hambre, un mundo en paz en donde las niñas y niños no sean asesinados por las balas y bombas, un mundo en donde se les permita a los pueblos regirse por sus decisiones y no se les imponga condiciones que conlleven al desplazamiento forzado hacia otros países que hoy se alarman por esta inmigración y no combaten la causa de la misma, se culpabiliza a los que perdieron la tranquilidad y bienestar producto de las decisiones de los que se consideran gendarmes del bien y del mal.

18.3 En este 70 aniversario de la UNESCO es importante reflexionar sobre lo avanzado en los compromisos educativos adquiridos y sobre los retos y desafíos que nos impone los avances y desarrollo científicos y técnicos, no debe ser el desarrollo del capital la única referencia para el fortalecimiento educativo, se debe retomar la educación centrada en el desarrollo y fortalecimiento de las habilidades y destrezas de las personas, una educación que brinde capacidades para las oportunidades, una educación para La Paz, el respeto a la vida y a la madre tierra. Nuestro orgullo de ser nicaragüense se sustenta en tener patria, tener sueños convertidos en realidad y tener conciencia que el camino es largo pero hemos comenzado a caminar conducidos por nuestros Comandante Daniel Ortega y compañera Rosario Murillo con pase y firme seguros de la victoria. Nicaragua asume y continuará destinando los recursos financieros para avanzar no sólo con la cobertura escolar universal sino alcanzar una calidad educativa que fortalezca la creatividad y la innovación, una calidad educativa que les permita a las personas utilizar para el bien y el bienestar el uso de la tecnología, una educación que restituya los derechos pero que forme en el cumplimiento del deber, solo de esta manera tendremos desarrollo sostenible y en armonía con el medio ambiente.

18.4 Señor Presidente, en el 2016 y 2017 se conmemoraría en Nicaragua el centenario y sesquicentenario de la muerte y nacimiento del padre del modernismo nuestro insigne poeta Rubén Darío agradecemos a los estados miembros en particular a la Directora General Irina Bokova, por su entusiasmo en acompañar nuestra conmemoración y aportar a su universalización. Muchas gracias

19. **The President:**

Thank you very much, Your Excellency. Our next speaker is His Excellency Mr Anar Karimov, Ambassador, Permanent Delegate of Azerbaijan to UNESCO. Your Excellency, you now have the floor.

20.1 **Mr Karimov** (Azerbaijan):

Dear Mr President of the General Conference, dear Madam Director-General, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen. First of all, I would like to congratulate you, Mr President, on your election and express my heartfelt wishes for a successful presidency. Allow me also to thank the outgoing President, Mr Hao Ping, for the excellent work during his mandate.

20.2 Ladies and gentlemen, UNESCO has passed through 70 years with the sacred goal of “building peace in the minds of men and women”. Several legal instruments were established, important conferences were held, and messages were sent all around the world in order to better protect and promote a culture of peace, to establish and ensure the continuity of intercultural dialogue, provide better access to education for all, preserve the environment and thus create better social and economic conditions for citizens of the world irrespective of their race, religion or ethnic background.

20.3 Unfortunately, the world is still witnessing wars and conflicts, extremism, radicalization, destruction of cultural and religious heritage. The international community cannot stay indifferent vis-a-vis such violence. We are glad that UNESCO, through its existing mechanisms and resources, spares no effort to keep this issue higher on the agenda. In this regard, we welcome the “#Unite4Heritage” campaign launched by the Director-General, as well as elaboration of the strategy to reinforce UNESCO’s action for the protection of culture and the promotion of cultural pluralism in the event of armed conflict.

20.4 We are living through historic moments, when the United Nations just recently adopted new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with the aim of achieving a better and safer world built upon sustainable economic and social development. I am confident that with its expertise and knowledge on education, UNESCO will successfully lead the international community to achieve the targets incorporated in the SDGs.

20.5 Distinguished delegates, Azerbaijan attaches great importance to cooperation with UNESCO. This cooperation has become more intensive after the signing of the framework agreement on cooperation between UNESCO and Azerbaijan in July 2013. Azerbaijan decided to sign this agreement with the primary goal of supporting UNESCO in its difficult time to advance its activities in core areas. This includes supporting UNESCO in such priority areas as education

for all, girls' education, safeguarding tangible and intangible cultural heritage, science and innovation technologies, disaster risk preparedness and many others.

20.6 Let me give you a few examples of the projects that are being implemented within the framework agreement: girls' education in east African countries; support for the training and vocational education and training (TVET) sub-sector through the Capacity Development for Education for All (CapEFA) Programme in Liberia; and the Avicenna Virtual Campus in Central Asia, a large-scale programme for teacher training in science and technology. While mentioning all these activities, I am delighted to underline the tremendous support of Her Excellency, Ms Mehriban Aliyeva, First Lady of Azerbaijan and UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador, in making these projects possible, as well as in promoting the message of peace and UNESCO's core values worldwide.

20.7 Ladies and gentlemen, situated on the crossroads of civilizations, cultures and religions, Azerbaijan became a place for intercultural dialogue. And we are proud of that. The World Forum on Intercultural Dialogue held in Azerbaijan for the third time is one of the best examples of our commitment in promoting inter-religious and intercultural dialogue. I would like to thank UNESCO as official partner of the Forum for its support and contribution to the success of this important event.

20.8 However, it is with profound regret that I must add that peace, security and stability in our region continue to be endangered and UNESCO's principles and values remain violated by an ongoing military occupation of the territories of Azerbaijan by the armed forces of Armenia. In fact, the deliberate acts of destruction of cultural heritage in different parts of the world is not something new to my people. Such and similar acts have taken place many years ago as a result of a cultural cleansing policy, and not a single historical monument, mosque or cemetery testifying to the centuries' old historical presence of the Azerbaijani population escapes destruction or desecration in the occupied territories and in Armenia itself. What is more interesting is that while being involved in all these crimes, and being a unique – I repeat – unique mono-ethnic and mono-religious country in a very diverse region, Armenia is trying to teach others about diversity and tolerance – dangerous, very flabbergasting logic.

20.9 Ladies and gentlemen, it is regretful that instead of using this forum to spread a message of peace and dialogue, yesterday we again heard hate and intolerance in the speech of the Foreign Minister of Armenia. But we still believe that the whole international community should stand together with UNESCO in achieving all goals that are ahead for creation of a safer world for humanity with sustainable peace, prosperity and development. Thank you very much.

21. The President:

Thank you very much, Your Excellency. Our next speaker is Her Excellency, Ms Mariam Katagum, Ambassador, Permanent Delegate of Nigeria to UNESCO. Your Excellency, you now have the floor.

22.1 Ms Katagum (Nigeria):

Mr President of the General Conference, Mr Chair of the Executive Board, Madam Director-General of UNESCO, Excellencies, Honourable Ministers, Ambassadors, ladies and gentlemen. I bring you warm greetings and best wishes from the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, His Excellency, President Muhammadu Buhari, Grand Commander of the Order of the Federal Republic (GCFR), and the people of Nigeria. We warmly congratulate you, Mr President, on your election and are confident that you and your great country will provide guidance to the Organization as we make the first moves towards the implementation of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. On this historic occasion, when we mark the 70th anniversary of our dear Organization, it is with pride and great pleasure that we in Nigeria acknowledge and celebrate the richness and fruitfulness of our 55 years of association with UNESCO.

22.2 Mr President, in recognition of its mandate and its proven achievements, the international community has placed UNESCO very much in the centre of several of the global activities for today and for the future. It is therefore up to us, as Member States, to ensure that UNESCO is provided with the means it needs to meet its ever-growing responsibilities. This is why Nigeria has often pleaded for more funds for UNESCO; if only some token increase in its budget, which has remained stagnant for several biennia.

22.3 Given the prevailing situation in the Organization, Nigeria is willing to go along with the emerging consensus for the proposed option for the zero nominal growth-plus (ZNG+) scenario for the 2016-2017 budget. Furthermore, we shall continue to provide core budget support for the UNESCO Institute for LifeLong Learning (UIL) and the International Bureau for Education (IBE) in recognition of their excellent performance, although our membership and presidency of the IBE is coming to an end.

22.4 Distinguished delegates, Nigeria commends the Director-General for the effective management of the Organization in spite of the lean financial resources, and particularly for intensifying UNESCO's relevance to Africa's development. However, we encourage a re-focusing of the Organization's programmes and structures in Africa, in the light of the Internal Oversight Service (IOS) evaluations and the whole concept of Priority Africa, which was launched 25 years ago.

22.5 Going forward, Nigeria pledges to continue its support for the UNESCO Multisectoral Office in Abuja, where last year we were able to second six senior staff to assist with the work in the subregion. We therefore call on other Member States to follow this example.

22.6 Mr President, Nigeria believes in the wisdom of taking a hard look at the governance of the Organization. We applaud all the efforts that have been made so far and believe that these can only be beneficial to the Organization, if they are undertaken with care, with wisdom and with all-inclusive consultations.

22.7 In education, we commend UNESCO for its coordinating role in the development of the Education 2030 Framework for Action agenda. Education remains a priority for our government, as we tackle issues of access and quality as well as the challenge of out-of-school children. Nigeria has taken proactive measures, such as the "Safe

School Initiative”, to address the effect of insecurity on education delivery. We invite the participation of development partners in our efforts to bring back education to north-eastern Nigeria which has been the worst hit by the scourge of the Boko Haram insurgency.

22.8 Science, technology and innovation together constitute one of the main pillars of the agenda for change of the new Nigerian administration. The second phase of the science component of the Nigeria/UNESCO special plan of cooperation will be developed as a pilot programme for the attainment of science-related Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the implementation of the STI policy elaborated in cooperation with UNESCO. We are happy to report that the International Centre for Biotechnology, a UNESCO category 2 centre, focusing on food security and tropical diseases, has taken off with three programmes recommended by its international scientific advisory committee.

22.9 Mr President, the Government of Nigeria is committed to the letter and spirit of supporting inclusive social development, fostering intercultural dialogue for the rapprochement of cultures and promoting ethical principles. We strongly condemn the illegal destruction of cultural objects and shall continue our cooperation with UNESCO in the implementation of the 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, through the activities of the Institute for African Culture and International Understanding, whose designation as a UNESCO category 2 institute was recently renewed.

22.10 Nigeria recognizes the importance of communication and information in the socio-economic development of its citizens. In line with the Freedom of Information Act which guarantees right to access to information and freedom of the press and the United Nations Special Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity, we are happy to report that we have responded to the Director-General’s request for a status report on the judicial enquiries conducted on journalists killed in Nigeria from 2006 to 2013. Nigeria has taken steps in the prevention of attacks against journalists through the establishment of a safe monitoring network.

22.11 Finally, Mr President, Nigeria wishes to thank the President of the 37th session of the General Conference and the Chair of the Executive Board for their contributions to the attainment of UNESCO’s lofty goal of creating a better world where peace will reign supreme! I thank you for your attention.

23. **The President:**

Thank you very much, Your Excellency, for the brevity of your intervention. Much appreciated. Our next speaker is His Excellency Mr Asein Isaev, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Kyrgyzstan in Belgium and Permanent Delegate to UNESCO. Your Excellency, you have the floor.

24.1 **Mr Isaev (Kyrgyzstan):**

Mr President of the General Conference, Mr Chair of the Executive Board, Madam Director-General, Your Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, kindly allow me to greet all the participants of the anniversary session of the General Conference and to congratulate Mr Stanley Mutumbu Simataa upon his appointment and to wish him every success in this high and important post. I would also like to express our gratitude to the President of the 37th session of the General Conference, Mr Hao Ping, for his fruitful work.

24.2 It is with great delight that I congratulate Member States of UNESCO, and the Secretariat presided over by Ms Irina Bokova, on the 70th anniversary of the Organization. This session of the General Conference, we are sure, will become a new point of reference for many countries regarding the progress of sustainable development, while we Member States will work together through UNESCO programmes, aiming at reaching peace by means of education, science, culture, information and communication.

24.3 Mr President, the end of the Second World War encouraged the implementation of such values as recognition of freedom, equality of peoples, and the universality of international principles of law which do not divide the world into great powers and the rest of the world anymore. However, today there are unsolved questions related to, for example, the inclusion of our children into the system of primary education. The world has not gotten rid of conflicts, which spring up due to intolerance towards cultures and religions. The existence of an information gap still complicates the process of integration of many countries into the global space of education.

24.4 We hope that UNESCO will continue to play a key role in development and implementation of a new global post-2015 agenda, on all the levels of its mandate in order to reach the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Today’s challenges force us to be more proactive and to employ education, science and culture while working on development issues.

24.5 Mr President, sustainable development of every State depends mainly on ensured security and stability, at local as well as global levels. We believe that today countries must put aside all differences and join forces to combat terrorism and violent extremism more actively. The systematic destruction of the world’s cultural heritage has reached an unprecedented level. Kyrgyzstan decidedly condemns all acts of terrorism and vandalism of cultural and historical heritage, as has occurred in Syrian Arab Republic, witnessed by all the international community. Terrorism has its roots and causes, but it does not have any justifications.

24.6 We would like to stress that the international community needs an efficient joint action not only against extremism per se, but also against its violent effects. Today we witness that the character of extremist threats is changing significantly. These violent effects depend less and less on geographic distribution – now we are dealing with extremist ideology infiltrating the minds of people in all regions of the world. Having consolidated their forces, based on common extremist ideology, various terrorist organizations are becoming powerful criminal structures with a vast network of followers. In this regard, we suggest that the phenomenon of extremism should be viewed not only on the level of the violent methods used, but primarily in the framework of implementing preventive measures discouraging the spreading of destructive ideological influence. Thus, we believe it necessary to aim State policy against extremist appearances in this sphere, and towards efficient protection of the State’s civic character, to strengthen the interaction with traditional religions along with the realization of citizens’ right to religious freedom.

24.7 In our country, we are paying special attention to amelioration of the quality of education, educating adults, and we strive to frame it in the spirit of global citizenship. In this regard, we support the importance of values, views and skills that contribute to tackling the existing and newly appearing global challenges threatening our planet. Today, based upon its historical and cultural background, the Kyrgyz Republic continues to develop and strengthen the national model of State governance based on the principles of parliamentary democracy.

24.8 Using this occasion, we would like to express our deep appreciation to all UNESCO Member States who voted for Kyrgyzstan on the anniversary of the United Nations General Assembly, electing Kyrgyzstan as a member of the Council for Human Rights for 2016-2017. This, surely, is proof of the high evaluation and recognition of positive changes by the international community. These changes in our country indicate a building of an open, democratic and inclusive society.

24.9 Mr President, in conclusion I would like to turn back to the subject of the creation of UNESCO 70 years ago, which has become the embodiment of the ideals of all humanity and the defender of the interests of all peoples of the world. As was noted by the Director-General, Ms Irina Bokova, "UNESCO was born out of the idea of the stability of peace and development." Thank you for your attention.

25. **The President:**

Thank you very much, Your Excellency. Our next speaker is His Excellency Mr Tepson Kalebe, Ambassador of Malawi to Belgium. Your Excellency, you have the floor.

26.1 **Mr Kalebe (Malawi):**

Mr President of the General Conference, Mr Chair of the Executive Board, Director-General of UNESCO, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen. Mr President, allow me to add my delegation's sincere congratulations on your election to the Presidency of the 38th session of the General Conference of UNESCO. I am confident that we will benefit from your intellect and wisdom. I also bring fraternal greetings from His Excellency Professor Arthur Peter Mutharika, President of the Republic of Malawi.

26.2 Mr President, as we celebrate UNESCO's 70th anniversary, the world is experiencing high levels of violence, intolerance and civil strife. This is leading to unprecedented levels of cultural destruction. It is therefore important that UNESCO play a major role in helping to bring lasting peace and offer solutions especially in its fields of competence, within the United Nations system. Our sincere gratitude, therefore, goes to the Director-General for the role UNESCO is playing in ensuring that heritages are preserved and protected. We also wish to commend Member States that continue to financially support UNESCO in its endeavour to strengthen the implementation of the cultural conventions.

26.3 Mr President, Malawi has made a strong commitment to accommodate the Incheon Declaration, the Education 2030 Framework for Action and Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4 on education. This is reflected in Malawi's revised Education Act which embodies the tenets of access, equity and efficiency in priority areas stipulated under Major Programme I. We look forward to continued support in reforming our technical and vocational education and training (TVET) system through the Better Education for Africa's Rise (BEAR) project and the training courses organized by UNESCO institutes.

26.4 Mr President, we are pleased with the provision of cleaner energy and other priorities set out in the science programme. We also find strategies outlined in the social and human sciences programme very pragmatic. We believe the envisaged activities outlined in these two programmes will help us respond to climate change challenges and support Malawi's social and scientific transformation. We therefore wish to urge UNESCO to maintain the community radios programme which will assist countries such as Malawi to disseminate information related to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

26.5 Mr President, allow me to commend the Director-General for her assurance to support the Participation Programme. I also wish to register my delegation's appreciation to the Korean National Commission for UNESCO's education for all (EFA) strategies. The two programmes have supported our National Commission by providing technical as well as financial assistance. Malawi would therefore encourage UNESCO to sustain programmes that promote information sharing and capacity building initiated under the North-North, North-South and South-South cooperation.

26.6 Mr President, allow me to conclude by pledging Malawi's continued support to the welfare of UNESCO and look forward to our continued interaction in the matters of our mutual interest. Mr President, distinguished delegates, thank you very much for your attention.

27. **The President:**

Thank you very much, Your Excellency, once again for the brevity of your intervention. Our next speaker is His Excellency Mr Marco Tulio Chicas Sosa, Ambassador, Permanent Delegate of Guatemala to UNESCO. Your Excellency, you have the floor.

28.1 **Sr. Chicas Sosa (Guatemala):**

El marco que ofrece el setenta aniversario de la UNESCO, evoca positivismo y a la vez franqueza, vemos con entusiasmo como se entrelazan los logros tangibles a lo largo de la historia, junto a los retos que aún estamos llamados a superar. El balance es indudablemente positivo. La UNESCO constituye un actor internacional que por su naturaleza ha sabido promover la paz, la educación, la cultura, las ciencias y la libertad de expresión. Es por ello que no me queda la menor duda de que la UNESCO estará a la altura de las circunstancias, en los trabajos que se requieren para coadyuvar a alcanzar los retos de la agenda post 2015. Guatemala reafirma su compromiso: con el marco de acción para la educación 2030, con la promoción de las ciencias naturales y sociales, continúa trabajando para garantizar la seguridad de los periodistas, así como en la protección y promoción de las expresiones culturales. Guatemala reitera los esfuerzos realizados para alcanzar la igualdad de género y el desarrollo de oportunidades para la juventud. Por otra parte, no puedo dejar de referirme a las irreparables pérdidas de vidas humanas, expresiones culturales y patrimonio cultural, a causa de la condenable intolerancia de grupos terroristas. Expresamos nuestra solidaridad a las víctimas, así

como a todos aquellos que sufren o han sufrido violaciones de los derechos humanos y hacemos votos por la pronta solución de tan grave y alarmante problemática.

28.2 La destrucción reciente de sitios considerados patrimonio cultural de la humanidad, así como el pillaje y el tráfico ilícito de bienes culturales son problemas de gran magnitud que demandan renovados esfuerzos de la UNESCO y sus países miembros, aún tenemos grandes espacios para continuar mejorando la lucha contra el tráfico ilícito de bienes culturales. Invito a la Señora Directora General de la UNESCO a continuar promoviendo espacios de diálogo en la materia con diversos actores, incluyendo a las grandes casas de subasta. En Guatemala, tenemos un gran aprecio y admiración por los pueblos y gobiernos de aquellos países en donde se encuentran los grandes mercados para la venta de arte. De hecho, dichos pueblos y gobiernos nos han acompañado y continúan apoyando incondicionalmente en el desarrollo democrático y el fortalecimiento institucional de mi país, por lo cual les estamos eternamente agradecidos.

28.3 Hay un adagio que dice: “amor no quita conocimiento”, y es que en algunos casos nos resulta difícil entender el ritmo con el que se avanza en la lucha contra el tráfico ilícito de bienes culturales. Apelamos a la solidaridad internacional y hablamos a la conciencia de los pueblos y gobiernos para que avancemos sin dilación en la ratificación de la convención de Unidroit, así como en la misma convención de 1970 sobre tráfico ilícito de bienes culturales. Les ruego que reciban esta reflexión como el llamado a la conciencia que hace un amigo que sufre constantemente y en carne propia la profanación, el saqueo y el tráfico ilícito del patrimonio de su país. No creemos que la UNESCO tenga por objeto constituirse en un foro para hacer señalamientos y denuncias, sino un espacio constructivo para impulsar el diálogo y la comprensión mutua entre las diversas culturas y civilizaciones. De manera que no estamos en contra de los países mercados del arte, ni en contra de las grandes casas de subasta del arte, sino que sencillamente deseamos compartirles que nos duele y vemos con sumo pesar, perplejidad e impotencia la manera en que algunas sociedades conciben y comercializan el patrimonio cultural de grandes civilizaciones del pasado. No estoy aquí para hacer cuestionamientos legales, sino para compartir nuestra visión y llamar la atención sobre las diferencias de puntos de vista, en la manera que distintas sociedades conciben el patrimonio cultural de los pueblos. Lo que en algunos lugares es concebido como patrimonio cultural inalienable, en otros lugares es concebido como un mero objeto de arte susceptible de ser enajenado.

28.4 ¿Qué de malo tiene aspirar a que nuestras sociedades evolucionen y dejen de considerar elegante y distinguida la comercialización del patrimonio de los pueblos? ¿Qué de malo tiene? Es cierto que tenemos por delante retos de gran magnitud, pero también es grande nuestra inquebrantable voluntad de superarlos. Y en esto, sí que navegamos en el mismo barco todos los pueblos y gobiernos representados en la UNESCO. La UNESCO ha demostrado ser un actor propositivo para encontrar soluciones a los retos que enfrentamos a nivel global, incluyendo el calentamiento global. Nosotros no podemos dejar de reconocer los esfuerzos del gobierno de Francia por organizar y liderar ejemplarmente la Cop 21. No puedo terminar mi intervención sin expresar nuestro respaldo a los trabajos que realiza la UNESCO en Guatemala. En el marco de la productiva visita que realizó la excelentísima Señora Irina Bukova, Directora general de la UNESCO a principios del año en curso y el constante apoyo de la oficina de la UNESCO en mi país. Finalmente, gracias a Azerbayán por el apoyo a la agenda inmaterial. Muchas Gracias.

29. **The President:**

Thank you very much, Your Excellency. Our next speaker is His Excellency Mr Matthew Sudders, Ambassador, Permanent Delegate of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to UNESCO. Your Excellency, you have the floor.

30.1 **Mr Sudders** (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland):

Thank you, Mr President. Excellencies, Mr President of the Executive Board, fellow Ambassadors, dear colleagues. First of all, congratulations Mr President on your election to the important post and thank you for the leadership you have already shown, but more importantly thank you for the work I know you are going to do over the next two years.

30.2 Happy birthday UNESCO. At 70 years old, many are ready to retire, but just lately I see UNESCO with a new sense of purpose and a new lease of life. I see that for the first time since the financial crisis began, a new programme will formally come into being at this General Conference, the new Geoparks Programme. The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland was proud to support the development of this programme, and if it is adopted, we look forward to welcoming the first ever UNESCO global geoparks conference in the United Kingdom next year.

30.3 We also look forward to UNESCO's role in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In getting there, we saw UNESCO's intellectual leadership. Please keep it up. We know, too, that UNESCO will be needed to respond to new challenges, never envisaged 70 years ago. Art, artefacts and monuments are how civilizations tell their stories. We celebrate and recognize this in many UNESCO programmes such as world heritage, intangible heritage, and Memory of the World programme. And while those programmes bring obligations and recognition, they are also designed for a world with an international system of States, and rules, borders and justice. But today's challenges come from people who recognize no rules, norms, borders, authorities or justice. Their simple purpose is destruction and the prevention of social cohesion. This is why the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland Government last week hosted a cultural protection summit. We are working to establish a cultural protection fund, and the Government has also committed to ratify finally The Hague Convention. As a first step, we launched a £3 million Iraqi Emergency Heritage Management Project to be implemented by the British Museum. We will continue to work developing our fund and will work with others, including UNESCO, as we do so.

30.4 Of course preventing violent extremism is also a key challenge for us all today, and it encompasses many different strands of our work. Education has a key role, for we know hatred is taught not born. But terrorists and extremism are not our only challenge. Just this week, the launch of the World Trends in Freedom of Expression and Media Development report highlighted the vital role a free media plays in a functioning democracy, and just how often that is under threat. Our Communication and Information Sector plays a vital role in embedding the values which underpin a constitutional commitment to the free flow of ideas.

30.5 Mr President, we could all speak for hours about the importance of UNESCO's programmes, highlighting each different one, and its need. But I think we should also talk about the challenge for UNESCO to adapt to the future, to make sure that it positions itself to deliver a clear and critical role within the wider United Nations system to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. Those goals have several key characteristics which we need to understand to implement the best programme. Leave no one behind is key. This means that we will need to know where are the marginalized, the excluded and the left behind. How do we reach them? How do we give them the opportunities we all want? This requires a data revolution, and adaptive policies.

30.6 When I talk about leaving no one behind, it is particularly important that we make small island developing States (SIDS) a priority, in actions, policies and resources. While the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were vertical and somewhat "siloeed", this new agenda has the potential to be much more integrated and horizontal. How will we make integrated solutions the norm rather than the exception? Where the MDGs drove a largely North-South agenda, the post-2015 development agenda is universal. In their work to make the United Nations system fit for purpose, the leadership of the United Nations has identified several key challenges. A key one for UNESCO is to become more transparent and accountable. That must specifically include accountability to beneficiaries and this is an area in which we still have much to do. We did not undertake the required beneficiary survey before we developed the new C/5. We do not evaluate routinely conferences or meetings. UNESCO staff are not able to benefit from client feedback as part of their appraisal. This is a real shame because we have many staff who are highly appreciated by those they work with and it would be nice to get this recognized.

30.7 Mr President, this also brought challenges from within the institution. Five million dollars was spent on a staff separation scheme which could otherwise have been spent on priority programmes. Elsewhere we need to see consistent, coherent, transparent responses to the recommendations of the recent audits. This needs to see us properly adhering to our rules on tendering and contracting, paying more attention to the field offices, improving human resources management and improving transparency and tackling conflicts of interest.

30.8 Mr President, UNESCO's reputation for accountability and transparency depends on getting this right. I cannot close without putting on record formal thanks to someone who has been the heart and soul of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland delegation for more years than I am allowed to mention. I mean, of course, Hilary Izon. Hilary, you have been the heart and soul of our delegation. You have been a dedicated member of staff and I salute your service. I salute your service and everything you have done for your country and your delegation. I wish you every happiness in your impending retirement. We are really going to miss you. Thank you.

31. **The President:**

Thank you very much Ambassador Sudders. Indeed for Hilary we shall all keep her in our thoughts. Our next speaker is Her Excellency Ms Lorena Sol de Pool, Ambassador, Permanent Delegate of El Salvador to UNESCO. Your Excellency you have the floor.

32.1 **Sr. de Pool (El Salvador):**

En un entorno geopolítico complejo, donde la cultura de paz cada día se ve amenazada por grandes conflictos armados, pérdida de vidas, migraciones forzadas, terrorismo y destrucción de la cultura de los pueblos, debemos cerrar filas como UNESCO, siendo los defensores y promotores del respeto, la justicia e inclusión social, solidaridad, tolerancia, diálogo e intercultural. La UNESCO debe conservar su carácter como la fuerza moral del sistema de Naciones Unidas, y la Agencia Líder en Educación. Los desafíos que tenemos por delante son inmensos y necesitamos una organización más participativa, más eficaz y más inclusiva, por ello la UNESCO debe de respetar la distribución geográfica de su personal especialmente, con los países no representados, como El Salvador. El Objetivo 4 educación, impone a nuestros países retos con los cuales estamos comprometidos, pero también a la UNESCO se le presentan grandes desafíos, principalmente en función de brindarnos un acompañamiento oportuno y realista para cumplir con la responsabilidad histórica que hemos asumido. Por consiguiente, El Salvador reafirma que la Educación es un derecho humano fundamental y un bien público, que promueve la prosperidad y crecimiento pacífico, inclusivo, equitativo y sostenible de nuestras sociedades. La meta cuatro (4) de Educación, se gestó en la UNESCO, producto de un intenso trabajo coordinado, de 4 años, entre los Estados Miembros, la Sociedad Civil, los organismos asociados y la Secretaría. Esta meta, que, mantendrá a la UNESCO en alta relevancia en la Agenda de Desarrollo Post 2015, por lo que agradecemos a su Directora General, quien será su mayor promotora

32.2 La Educación Técnica es una excelente herramienta para lograr una mayor integración calificada de la juventud a la vida productiva, lo que ha permitido cambiar su enfoque de formación, iniciando esta transformación con la creación y puesta en marcha en El Salvador de programas que incentivan y apoyan con becas a los jóvenes que terminan noveno grado, a continuar sus estudios a nivel de bachillerato técnico y a los que terminan bachillerato técnico o general, a continuar sus estudios a nivel de educación superior técnica. En los últimos años, y con mayor frecuencia cada nuevo ítem de conocimiento se convierte en propiedad privada. Muchas veces se asume que eso es positivo, y que los beneficios económicos justifican la privatización. Este fenómeno se ha agudizado en las décadas recientes y constituye uno de los rasgos que están caracterizando a las llamadas "sociedades del conocimiento". Por ello, debemos evitar la privatización del conocimiento, y promoverlo como un bien común libremente accesible y compatible.

32.3 El Señor Presidente de la República, Profesor Salvador Sánchez Ceren, impulso desde el inicio de su gestión el desarrollo sostenible de la Reserva de la Biosfera, integrada por El Salvador, Honduras y Guatemala, la cual fue catalogada por la UNESCO como «Región Modelo». Por ello, El Salvador considera de crucial importancia el Programa MAB y nos preocupa mucho su drástica reducción de presupuesto, por lo que exhortamos a la Directora General a fortalecerlo. El Salvador, así como el resto de los países de Centro América, es altamente vulnerable al cambio climático. Por ello, nos asociamos al llamado de los SIDS, nuestros amigos y aliados del Caribe, Pacífico Sur e Océano Índico, para apoyar las acciones a nivel de la UNESCO, que permitan implementar actividades de educación para el desarrollo sostenible y adaptación al cambio climático, que mitiguen los efectos destructivos que amenazan la subsistencia de nuestros pueblos.

32.4 La evidencia muestra la necesidad de generar conocimiento y construir capacidades de adaptación, ante un fenómeno que podría afectar significativamente territorios, ecosistemas, actividades económicas y poblaciones ya de por sí vulnerables. Acordamos que se reactiven los marcos y mecanismos que contribuirán al desarrollo social mediante el intercambio de experiencias del Programa MOST y así lograr reducir mediante el intercambio de experiencias las desigualdades socioeconómicas. Para concluir, exhortamos a la UNESCO a asumir su rol de liderazgo dentro de la Agenda 2030 y que destine los fondos de manera racional para su exitosa ejecución. Muchas gracias

33. **The President:**

Thank you very much Your Excellency. Our next speaker is His Excellency Mr Ali Amir, Ambassador, Permanent Delegate of Comoros to UNESCO. Your Excellency you have the floor.

34.1 **M. Amir (Comores)**

Monsieur le Président de la Conférence générale, Monsieur le Président du Conseil exécutif, Madame la Directrice générale de l'UNESCO, Mesdames et Messieurs les Ministres, Chefs de délégation, Honorable assistance, Mesdames et Messieurs, à la place de notre Ministre de l'éducation nationale retenu par des raisons imprévues, l'honneur m'échoit de vous féliciter, Monsieur le Président – S. E. M. Mutumba Simataa –, de votre brillante élection pour diriger la 38^e session de la Conférence générale de notre Organisation. Notre gratitude va tout naturellement à l'endroit de votre prédécesseur, S. E. M. Hao Ping. Nos vives et sincères félicitations sont aussi adressées au Président du Conseil exécutif, S. E. M. Mohamed Sameh Amr. Aussi notre chaleureuse gratitude à l'endroit de la Directrice générale, Mme Irina Bokova, vous qui n'avez ménagé aucun effort à défendre, de manière excellente, les nobles missions de notre Institution malgré la grande crise financière qu'elle traverse. Je vous renouvelle encore une fois, au nom du Président de l'Union des Comores, S. E. M. Ikililou Dhoinine, et au nom de mon pays, nos félicitations les meilleures.

34.2 Mesdames et Messieurs, Au lendemain de la Deuxième Guerre mondiale, il y a 70 ans, les peuples se sont mis d'accord pour construire l'UNESCO. Ce mémorable anniversaire marque un moment solennel pour tous les pays membres. Aujourd'hui, après sept décennies marquées par de nombreux défis et de multitudes (multiples ?) menaces, l'UNESCO est toujours restée l'Organisation des Nations Unies par excellence, elle revêt une importance capitale de par son leadership intellectuel, ses valeurs et concepts fondamentaux forgés depuis sa création en 1945.

34.3 En effet, nous savons que l'impact de l'UNESCO reste capital dans un esprit de paix, de solidarité et d'humanisme international. Le temps nous interpelle de maintenir le niveau d'excellence de notre Organisation intellectuelle reconnue mondialement. Elle doit continuer à préserver son image dont tous les pays aspirent de ses valeurs intellectuelles, en mettant l'accent sur l'éducation inclusive de qualité et de promouvoir des possibilités d'apprentissage tout au long de la vie pour tous, moteur des programmes phares.

34.4 Enfin, nous nous félicitons de l'Agenda 2030, un cadre universel susceptible de renforcer davantage et augurer les jalons de coopération Sud-Sud et Nord-Sud mais pour atteindre les objectifs de l'ODD4, l'UNESCO doit penser beaucoup plus aux pays les plus démunis où les enfants sont privés de fournitures de base et où l'ordinateur n'est autre qu'un outil de luxe.

34.5 Mesdames et Messieurs, Le 25 septembre dernier, aux Nations Unies, tous les pays se sont positionnés pour un nouveau cap à des nouveaux défis pour l'Agenda 2030, dont les valeurs et les idées de l'UNESCO sont bien intégrées au plan d'action du développement durable. À cet égard, nous nous réjouissons que les pays du Sud et les petits États insulaires en voie de développement soient au cœur des préoccupations de l'UNESCO.

34.6 Par ailleurs, connaissant les défis majeurs qui caractérisent l'Agenda 2030 pour le développement durable des petits États insulaires en voie de développement, l'Union des Comores prie la Directrice générale de bien vouloir continuer ses efforts pour garantir à ces pays une éducation de qualité et des possibilités d'apprentissage tout au long de la vie. Aussi, nous nous réjouissons de l'accord de principe qui a été donné à mon pays depuis 2009 concernant le campus virtuel et la politique nationale en matière scientifique et émettons le souhait de voir, très rapidement, la mise en œuvre de ces deux importants projets engagés.

34.7 Excellences, Mesdames et Messieurs, l'Union des Comores dispose d'un plan intérimaire de l'Éducation 2013-2015 qui a bénéficié récemment d'une revue sectorielle, qui vise à renforcer les capacités d'exécution et élever le niveau des performances dans la mise en œuvre du processus de planification sectorielle. L'analyse des premiers éléments montre que le plan sectoriel est une réelle tentative d'élaboration d'un processus de planification globale du système éducatif comorien, ouvrant une dynamique de réformes en profondeur.

34.8 Dans le cadre de la culture, l'Union des Comores compte sur le soutien constant de l'UNESCO pour développer et pérenniser des initiatives en faveur de la sauvegarde du patrimoine culturel et naturel. Dans cet ordre d'idées, nous formulons le souhait de voir en Afrique les bureaux hors Siège travailler efficacement en bonne collaboration avec les délégations permanentes et les commissions nationales.

34.9 Honorable assistance, la tenue très prochainement à Paris de la COP 21 est une opportunité de poser en haut de l'agenda les conséquences du changement climatique sur les petits États insulaires en voie de développement dont fait partie mon pays, souvent frappé par les cyclones fréquents, le volcan, les tremblements de terre et les intempéries massives qui nous fragilisent. Comme l'a souligné S. E. M. le Président de l'Union des Comores, le Docteur Ikililou Dhoinine, à la 70^e Assemblée générale de l'Organisation des Nations Unies – je cite : « Nous ne pouvons pas imaginer l'épanouissement de l'homme sur terre sans agir d'urgence pour lutter contre le changement climatique et ses impacts en préservant et en utilisant de manière durable les océans, les mers et les ressources marines pour le développement durable ».

34.10 Mesdames et Messieurs, qu'il me soit permis de souligner que le temps nous interpelle et nous incombe, il nous appartient donc également d'assurer la gestion durable de l'eau, la protection des océans, les sciences et le renforcement des études stratégiques aux énergies renouvelables, afin de garantir un développement durable.

34.11 Monsieur le Président, je voudrais préciser que l'éducation, la science et la culture constituent le socle sur lequel reposent la paix et le développement de l'humanité tout entière. L'accompagnement donc des Comores par l'UNESCO et par les partenaires internationaux est essentiel pour sa réussite.

34.12 Avant de clore, il me plaît de rappeler que le Gouvernement de l'Union des Comores souscrit au cadre d'action adopté, le 4 novembre 2015, à l'UNESCO et de mentionner les grandes thématiques que mon pays, les Comores, encourage vivement la Directrice générale de s'y atteler davantage, notamment la culture de la paix, la promotion de la jeunesse et leurs préoccupations, l'autonomisation des femmes, l'éducation à la citoyenneté mondiale, la liberté d'expression, l'*Histoire générale de l'Afrique* et, enfin, une mention très particulière aux problèmes qui touchent spécifiquement les petits États insulaires en voie de développement et les pays les moins avancés dont les Comores. Je vous remercie.

35. **The President:**

Thank you very much Your Excellency. Our next speaker is His Excellency Mr Ivo Goldstein, Ambassador, Permanent Delegate of Croatia to UNESCO. Your Excellency you now have the floor.

36.1 **Mr Goldstein (Croatia):**

Distinguished Mr President of the General Conference, Mr Chair of the Executive Board, Madam Director-General, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen. Distinguished Mr President, allow me to express my congratulations to you for being elected as the President of the General Conference.

36.2 Being well aware of the important role UNESCO has to play, we would also like to express our support to Ms Irina Bokova for all the reforms of UNESCO and a clear redefinition of the Organization's priorities. The United Nations and UNESCO are celebrating their 70th anniversaries, and the Republic of Croatia would like to confirm its strong support and commitment to these organizations, as well as to multilateralism in addressing the challenges we are all facing together.

36.3 In September this year, world leaders adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the United Nations – a plan of action to try to change the world we all live in, for the next 15 years. The 2030 Agenda follows goals and achievements that were already set and some of them achieved in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and it shows new intentions and new paths in every part of UNESCO's agenda: culture, education, human rights, science, access to information, technology and innovation, to mention a few. The fundamental role of education, science, culture and communications is one of the main conditions for the maintenance of peace, accomplishment of social cohesion and sustainable development.

36.4 The Republic of Croatia effectively promotes all of UNESCO's programme areas, and in coordination with other governmental and non-governmental organizations, supports UNESCO's long-term initiatives and projects. The unique structure of UNESCO creates a synergy between the public and private sectors, non-governmental organizations and civil society.

36.5 Dear colleagues, as a member of the World Heritage Committee, the Republic of Croatia wishes first of all to contribute to the preservation and protection of inscribed heritage on the World Heritage List, identifying new and extraordinary world heritage, encouraging international cooperation, and promoting a balanced World Heritage List. The Republic of Croatia recognizes education and science as its priorities for development as a basis for long-term social stability, economic progress and security and, by all means, cultural identity.

36.6 That is the one of the reasons we are proud that our initiative for the proclamation of 5 November as the "World Day of Romani Language" was endorsed by the Executive Board this October. We would like to express our sincere gratitude to UNESCO and all the States Parties for having supported this proposal, thereby enhancing intercultural dialogue and linguistic diversity of the world. Our gratitude goes especially to Hungary who co-signed the proposal, and Slovenia, Saudi Arabia and Greece for signing the proposal.

36.7 We would also like to thank you once more on behalf of the Republic of Croatia for providing funds for flood-affected areas in Croatia last year, 2014, from the UNESCO Emergency Participation Programme for the protection, preservation and enhancement of the cultural heritage in Sisak-Moslavina County, and specifically the Milivoj Cvetnić Town Library in Hrvatska Kostajnica which was severely damaged in the floods.

36.8 We are also very pleased that the project for education for schoolgirls to reduce poverty in Tanzania and the National and University Library in Zagreb's project for the information literacy of graduates in Ethiopia were chosen in the framework of UNESCO's Participation Programme. We strongly believe that these programmes have the perspective of a long-term cooperation.

36.9 Let me conclude with one important subject for us – and that is regional cooperation. Croatia has been actively cooperating with all countries in the region for years. In the forthcoming period, we are hoping to widen the scope of regional as well as European and non-European cooperation, and to carry out new innovative projects in the field of education, science and culture in order to support peace and development in all parts of the world including our own. Thank you very much.

37. **The President:**

Thank you very much Your Excellency. Our next speaker is His Excellency Mr Roberto Ramirez Aldana, Ambassador, Permanent Delegate of Honduras to UNESCO. Your Excellency, you now have the floor.

38.1 **Sr. Ramirez Aldana (Honduras):**

Reconocemos que aún podemos hacer más, pues muchas tareas aún están por resolverse... debido en parte a las mutaciones e interacciones de conflictos entre lo político, lo cultural y lo territorial que nos obligan como Organización, ver hacia atrás y revisar las políticas y trabajos, sin variar los objetivos. No se trata sólo del "qué" hacer, eso está claro, sino del cómo lograrlo.

38.2 Por otra parte, debemos reconocer que el dinamismo de la UNESCO corresponde a la acción de los Estados Miembros, que tenemos enormes responsabilidades para heredar a nuestras generaciones un espacio más amigable con el medio ambiente, más tolerante con la diversidad y más consciente en la búsqueda creativa de soluciones que sean sostenibles a largo plazo, para construir un mundo con mayor igualdad, con mayor equidad y en un escenario de justicia, que produzca esa paz deseada. Honduras, ubicada en el centro geoestratégico y en el corazón del hemisferio americano, posee una exuberante riqueza natural que concentra el 6% de la biodiversidad del planeta, en fuentes hidrológicas, bosques, selvas, playas, bellos arrecifes coralinos, que son punto neurálgico del debate entre el Desarrollo y la Conservación. Los clamores de desarrollo de nuestros pueblos demandan mecanismos racionales y de sostenibilidad de los recursos a nuestro alcance, para procurar mejores posibilidades de preservación; es así que Honduras reafirma su apoyo y garantiza la credibilidad y eficacia en los trabajos del sector de las Ciencias de UNESCO, en particular los Programas del Hombre y La Biosfera (MAB); el Programa Hidrológico Inter-gubernamental (PHI); y la Comisión Oceánica Inter-gubernamental (COI). Estamos construyendo el impulso en investigaciones sobre sitios potenciales de aguas subterráneas para asegurar medidas claras de preservación de los recursos con capacidades innovadoras para el desarrollo sostenible.

38.3 Honduras se siente orgullosa y comprometida con sus sitios de patrimonio, y las reservas de Biosfera del Río Plátano, Biosfera Cacique Lempira “Señor de las Montañas” y Biosfera Transfronteriza Trifinio Fraternidad, misma que compartimos con las repúblicas de Guatemala y el Salvador, y que no es solamente un lugar que brilla por su belleza natural, sino que representa la paz centroamericana que con mucho esfuerzo logramos construir alrededor de esa montaña, constituyendo un símbolo de fraternidad y armonía entre nuestros pueblos y un acto concreto de la conexión que debe existir entre la naturaleza y la paz. También nuestra riqueza multiétnica y multicultural nos compromete a seguir trabajando en reforzar las convenciones de la UNESCO relacionadas con la protección y promoción del Patrimonio y de la diversidad cultural. Nos complace informar que nuestro país ha iniciado tareas en la exploración e investigación, a partir de vestigios arqueológicos descubiertos este año, en la zona de la Mosquitia, donde pudo estar situada una misteriosa y fascinante cultura ancestral -única en América- llamada Ciudad Blanca. Honduras continuará impulsando el fortalecimiento de la Convención de 1970, para optimizarla como instrumento normativo en: propuestas de solución de conflictos, de negociaciones bilaterales y en la implementación de las medidas jurídicas y prácticas contra el tráfico ilícito de bienes culturales. Es así como nos congratulamos por la aprobación de sus directrices operativas en la reciente Asamblea General de los Estados Parte, después de un esfuerzo que esperó más de 40 años. Este logro debe materializarse ahora en la voluntad de los estados de respetar la historia y dignidad de los pueblos víctimas del tráfico de sus bienes culturales, que ha sido cubierto con una fachada de “comercialización formalizada” en un mercado del arte que muchas veces desconoce deliberadamente esta Convención.

38.4 En Educación, Honduras saluda la adopción-en el contexto de esta Conferencia General-del Marco de Acción 2030, por una educación equitativa y accesible para todos. Acompañamos las políticas públicas de la Educación, y sus principios de acceso universal, de calidad, de respeto a la diversidad, a la igualdad de derechos de género, a la promoción de la tolerancia, la paz y la no violencia. Sobre este último aspecto, consideramos que la UNESCO debe enfocar sus programas en las particularidades de cada país y región, respetando la diversidad, aun mas en momentos donde parte de Centroamérica es azotada por el fenómeno de las pandillas que convierte muchos centros educativos en verdaderas zonas de guerra. En cuanto al Cambio Climático, el gobierno de Honduras ha dejado claro en los foros internacionales que nos encontramos entre los seis países del mundo más afectados por este fenómeno, y ha hecho un llamado, a que toda respuesta que se adopte en la construcción de acuerdos globales; se haga bajo los principios de responsabilidad compartida y diferenciada, es decir, que quienes más han contribuido a generar esta crisis, son quienes más deben aportar para resolverla. Trabajar en estas líneas de esfuerzo significa para Honduras una esperanza; construir caminos y adoptar medidas justas para las naciones, seguirá siendo la responsabilidad de Unesco. Recordemos que la Justicia es imprescindible para desarrollar paz; lo contrario, el efecto de la injusticia será siempre violencia, angustia e inseguridad. Solo con justicia, podremos construir y generar paz entre las naciones. Muchas gracias

39. **The President:**

Thank you very much Your Excellency. Our next speaker is His Excellency Professor Mohammed Sheya, Deputy Permanent Delegate of United Republic of Tanzania to UNESCO. Your Excellency, you now have the floor.

40.1 **Mr Sheya** (United Republic of Tanzania):

Thank you Mr President. I have the pleasure to read the statement on behalf of the Permanent Delegate of the United Republic of Tanzania to UNESCO, Her Excellency Begum Karim Taj, Ambassador to UNESCO. President of the General Conference, Mr Chair of the Executive Board, Madam Director-General of UNESCO, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, please accept my heartfelt congratulations on your election as President of the 38th session of the General Conference of UNESCO. I would like to assure you of my Government's full support. I would also like to thank the President of the 37th session of the General Conference, the Chair of the Executive Board and the Director-General of UNESCO for their good leadership. As UNESCO celebrates its 70th anniversary, my Government continues to support the Director General in her efforts to ensure that UNESCO remains relevant, revitalized and resilient.

40.2 Mr President, this session of the General Conference is taking place at a time when the world is witnessing unprecedented socio-economic disparities among peoples and nations, radicalization and violent extremism, exclusion and the effects of climate disruption. The recent adoption by United Nations General Assembly of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development provides renewed hope for the next 15 years in which 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 targets, several of them addressing the priority areas of UNESCO, will define the global development framework. In particular goal 4, “Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all”, which has been informed by the Muscat Agreement and the unfinished business of education for all (EFA) and the education-related Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), defines the Education 2030 Framework for Action.

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

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

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

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

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

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

41. **The President:**

Thank you very much Your Excellency. Our next speaker is Her Excellency, Ms Khadar Bashiir Ali, Minister of Education, Culture and Higher Education of Somalia. Your Excellency, you now have the floor.

42.1 **Ms Bashiir Ali (Somalia):**

Mr President of the General Conference, Mr Chair of the Executive Board, Honourable Ministers, Ambassadors, Permanent Delegations, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen. Good morning and *salāmu 'alaikum wa-rahmatu llāhi wa-barakātuh*. (Peace and the mercy and blessings of God be upon you). I bring you greetings from Somalia and our President, Mr Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, and our Prime Minister, Omar Abdirashid.

42.2 Mr President, let me give you a quick glance of the realities of Somalia. As you might know Somalia is a post-conflict fragile nation recovering from 22 years of conflict. We have now moved from a transitional government to a federal system of government. In Somalia, we are committed to bring change to our nation, but we all know that change does not come easy. Change brings tension and resistance to new ideas and systems. Just to give you a quick example, this year for the first time we instituted centralized exams in Somalia and our ministry was bombed as a resistance to the centralized exams. However, despite all the challenges we have, we have hope. Coming from the abyss of violence, we cannot have anything but hope.

42.3 Somalia, in a way Mr President, is a success story. We are a country with great potential and great possibilities. In the education sector our Government, led by our President and Prime Ministers, is committed to provide access to quality education for all Somali children in an equitable manner. Currently Mr President, education in Somalia is a privilege, it is not a right. Only children whose parents can afford to pay school fees go to school, and the numbers of children that are out of school are staggering. According to a recent population estimate conducted by our Minister of Planning, 70% of the population in Somalia is under the age of seven, 46% of those are between the ages of 1 and 14, and 70% per cent of those children are out of school. Given these figures, reform for us is an urgent mandate. We cannot afford to wait. We want to provide for our children and our people good quality accessible basic education, economic livelihood, and opportunities for our youth, sustainable technical and vocational education that leads to livelihood and opportunities. But most important of all, Mr President, we want to provide a counter narrative to respond to violent extremism. Our youth have been radicalized and recruited to join destabilizing activities. We must find a solution. We are also losing a great number of our youth in the seas. They are migrating and leaving our nation and looking for other opportunities.

42.4 Girls' education is a personal and professional priority of mine. As a woman, I am committed to increasing the numbers of girls in schools. Transparency and accountability are also one of our priorities. In order to achieve this, we must have a uniform curriculum that can produce productive citizens for our country. We must have qualified teachers, safe schools and learning environments, effective teaching and learning materials that are socially and culturally

appropriate. We also need to restructure our cultural identity and heritage. As you might know, Mr President, with war you lose everything and we have lost our culture, our language and our customs. We need to restore those and bring them to the forefront of our agenda.

42.5 We need also to increase the production of quality data. We all know, Mr President, that peace and stability lead to social and economic development and these are priorities for our Government. We are committed to peace and stability despite all the odds. However, we cannot embark on this journey by ourselves without your help. We are grateful to UNESCO and other donor agencies for the good work you are doing in support of our people. Education is an important factor to eradicate poverty and radicalization and we must collectively respond to these needs. As an African proverb says: "A journey of a thousand steps begins with the first one". Let us take this first one together. Thank you very much.

43. **The President:**

Thank you very much Your Excellency. Be assured that UNESCO will continue to provide your country and your nationals with the required support. Our next speaker is His Excellency, Monseigneur Francesco Follo, Permanent Observer of the Holy See to UNESCO. Your Excellency you have the floor, Sir.

44.1 **Mgr Follo (Saint-Siège) :**

Excellences, le Saint-Siège vous présente, Monsieur le Président de la Conférence générale, ses salutations et ses félicitations. Bien sûr, il félicite et remercie l'ancien président Hao-Ping pour son excellent travail qu'il a fait à tous les niveaux. Madame Irina Bokova, Directrice générale, je vous exprime l'appréciation du Saint-Siège pour l'excellent engagement qui garantit la réalisation du programme de l'UNESCO.

44.2 Le 70^e anniversaire de l'UNESCO est une bonne occasion pour faire le point de notre histoire et réfléchir sur notre futur, en accueillant l'invitation du Saint-Père à un nouveau dialogue sur la façon dont nous construisons l'avenir de la planète. Le Pape François nous invite à une éducation « écologique » qui doit tenir compte d'une éthique de la vie et du dialogue. Dialogue qui implique une éducation à l'écoute.

44.3 En grec, « maison » se dit *oikos* et « gérant » se dit *oikonomos*. Lorsque le gérant sait qu'il gère une demeure que d'autres habitent en même temps que lui et habiteront après lui, alors le respect des droits d'autrui doit primer pour lui. Le gérant doit respecter la maison commune par respect pour ceux qui l'habitent et l'habiteront ; cette maison commune doit être aimée et entretenue, mais nous ne lui devons pas la vénération que nous ne devons qu'à autrui. Le gérant doit être mû par la solidarité envers son prochain, y compris celui qui n'existe pas encore.

44.4 L'encyclique *Laudato Si'* du Pape François reprend un propos du Pape émérite Benoît XVI qui invitait à développer une « écologie de l'humain ». L'intelligence commande de respecter l'autre homme autant que la maison que nous habitons ensemble dans la suite des temps : une écologie qui ignorerait les droits de l'homme à être un homme aujourd'hui et demain ne saurait pas ce qu'est une maison. Le Pape François dit que l'intelligence commande réciproquement que nous respections notre maison commune parce que nous prouverons notre amour du prochain en la respectant. Parmi tous les dangers qui nous menacent, se cache un projet qu'on pourrait appeler « abolition de l'homme ». Nous avons les moyens intellectuels de la refuser. Ce faisant, nous prouverons notre solidarité et amour envers le prochain, quelles que soient les distances spatiales et chronologiques qui nous en séparent. Et comme le verbe « aimer » est toujours lié au verbe « faire », le souci que nous aurons de notre maison commune se traduira en une authentique œuvre de miséricorde et de justice. Merci de votre écoute.

45. **The President:**

Thank you very much, Your Excellency, once again for your brevity in terms of intervention. Our next speaker is His Excellency, Mr Christian Leffler, Deputy Secretary-General of the European Union. Your Excellency, you have the floor.

46.1 **Mr Leffler (European Union):**

Mr President of the General Conference, Mr Chair of the Executive Board, Mr Deputy Director-General, distinguished colleagues. I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and the candidate countries Turkey, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Albania.

46.2 Mr President, Deputy Director-General, as the United Nations and UNESCO are celebrating their 70th anniversaries this year, we would like to reiterate the European Union's full support and commitment to this crucial Organization. I would like to thank the Director-General for her determined leadership which remains essential in the light of the challenges ahead of us.

46.3 In September, we adopted in New York the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, a common plan of action to transform our world to a more sustainable footing for the next 15 years. It builds on our achievements in implementing the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), including those that have become a reality through the support of UNESCO. The 2030 Agenda reinforces our intent to move our collective commitments forward on every front of UNESCO's mandate. The comprehensiveness of this new Agenda reflects the complexity and interlinkages of today's challenges. We all have the responsibility for its realization. The European Union is fully committed to play its part. We will implement the Agenda at home and will continue to promote sustainable development worldwide in its economic, social and environmental dimensions, with a particular focus on the countries most in need.

46.4 UNESCO has an important role to play in translating the goals into concrete action, while ensuring coherence with the efforts throughout the United Nations system. We recall in this regard the request of the Executive Board to pursue reform efforts in order to continue strengthening UNESCO's competitive edge and organizational delivery capacity to support Member States in delivering on the Agenda globally, regionally and nationally. The European Union, whose current support to UNESCO amounts to nearly €70 million, remains committed to working closely with the Organization in this effort.

(The speaker continues in French)

46.5 Monsieur le Président, Monsieur le Directeur général adjoint, l'Union européenne réaffirme sa profonde préoccupation au sujet de l'augmentation des attaques délibérées contre le patrimoine culturel à travers le monde. Nous soulignons à cet égard l'importance de la stratégie visant à renforcer la mission de l'UNESCO, ainsi que le respect des autres décisions des Nations Unies. Nous notons également le besoin d'une coopération plus efficace entre l'UNESCO et les autorités nationales pour remédier au manque de données de terrain fiables.

46.6 L'Union européenne s'engage à poursuivre sa collaboration étroite avec l'UNESCO et soutient les efforts que celle-ci mène en lien étroit avec l'ensemble de ses partenaires-clés, en vue de protéger le patrimoine culturel et la diversité culturelle et de faire face aux menaces liées au terrorisme et à l'extrémisme violent. Conformément à la résolution 2199 du Conseil de sécurité, l'Union européenne a également engagé les mesures appropriées pour prévenir le commerce illégal des biens culturels. Ce trafic illicite d'œuvres d'art contribue directement au financement de l'État islamique et d'autres organisations terroristes.

(L'orateur poursuit en anglais)

46.7 Mr President, Mr Deputy Director-General, as a party to the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions which marks its 10th anniversary this year, the European Union underlines the continued relevance of its founding principles such as respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, including artistic freedom, and the importance of their further implementation in the context of technological and digital change.

46.8 The European Union welcomes the Education 2030 Framework for Action to mobilize efforts to reach Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4. We will continue to support education efforts globally, recognizing the crucial role of education in achieving multiple goals across the 2030 Agenda, including the goal to promote peaceful and inclusive societies. The European Union supports governments in over 40 countries worldwide to provide quality education and learning opportunities for all. Since 2004, our contribution has helped 300,000 new female students to enrol in secondary education. We underline education as a human right and its importance in combating violent extremism and promoting development, peace and security and human rights. The European Union finances the UNESCO Net-Med Youth project in order to promote young people's participation in democracy. We equally support programmes to provide education for Syrian refugees in Jordan and to support the education sector reform in Iraq.

46.9 Freedom of opinion and expression are the fundamental rights of every human being. The European Union will continue to uphold these rights online and offline and to condemn all violations of these rights, including attacks against journalists and bloggers both in the framework of multilateral organizations and its bilateral relations. The European Union continues to support concrete actions in this regard, e.g. through funding to the programme by "Reporters Without Frontiers" to protect journalists and bloggers. We underline the importance of concerted action within the United Nations, including of the United Nations Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity, led by UNESCO. We welcome the decision adopted by the Executive Board at its 196th session on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity and the United Nations Security Council Resolution 2222 on the protection of journalists in conflict situations. The upcoming UNESCO conference in February with the participation of news organizations will provide a unique platform for dialogue on journalists' safety.

46.10 We remain concerned about the situation in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, Ukraine, and look forward to the follow-up on the Executive Board's request for continued collection of information as well as for the establishment of a monitoring mechanism on the situation. Noting the steps taken to increase UNESCO's efficiency, we recall that its capacity to respond to the pressing challenges and to implement the 2030 Agenda depends on its effective management, sufficient budgetary resources as well as increased mobilization of the transparent and diverse extrabudgetary resources

(The speaker continues in French)

46.11 Enfin, Monsieur le Président, Monsieur le Directeur général-Adjoint, nous nous félicitons de la décision adoptée par le Conseil exécutif, à la 197^e session, sur la lutte contre le changement climatique, COP 21. Nous encourageons l'UNESCO et ses États membres à se mobiliser sur l'enjeu de changement climatique, notamment sur la recherche de solutions, et à participer activement à la mise en œuvre des conclusions de la COP 21, puis de la COP 22, afin de poursuivre la réalisation des objectifs de l'Agenda 2030. Je vous remercie pour votre attention.

47. The President:

Thank you very much, Your Excellency. Our next speaker is His Excellency Dr Abdulaziz Othman Altwaijri, Director-General of the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. You now have the floor, Sir.

48.1 السيد التويجري (إيسيسكو):

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم، السيد رئيس المؤتمر العام الثامن والثلاثين لليونيسكو، السيد المدير العام المساعد، السادة والسيدات، السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته، يسعدني أن أتحدث إليكم باسم إيسيسكو متمنياً لمؤتمركم النجاح في أعماله ومتوجّه بالتهنئة إلى السيد رئيس المؤتمر. إن العلاقات المثمرة القائمة بين اليونيسكو والإيسيسكو تزداد تطوراً في مجالات العمل المشترك، وسنعمل على تعزيزها وتطويرها.

48.2 السيد الرئيس، السادة والسيدات، إن العالم اليوم مُثقل بتحديات كثيرة تتفاقم باستمرار، وصراعات ونزاعات تهدد الأمن والسلم الدوليين وتنتهك ميثاق الأمم المتحدة والقانون الدولي. وإن الانتهاكات الخطيرة تمارس في مناطق النزاعات المسلحة، والتي نتج عنها تدمير كبير لل عمران والآثار والمعالم الحضارية، وتهجير ممنهج للإنسان والعنف الذي يطال الأقليات السلمة في ميانمار وجمهورية أفريقيا الوسطى من تطهير عرقي وديني. كل ذلك يشكل تحدياً خطيراً للمجتمع الدولي يتطلب التعامل معه بمنتهى الحزم. كما أن الأوضاع المأساوية التي يعيشها الشعب الفلسطيني المحاصر تحت الاحتلال الإسرائيلي والانتهاكات التي تظال المسجد الأقصى واقتحامه من طرف المتطرفين، تحت حماية السلطات الإسرائيلية، كل ذلك يعد من جرائم الحرب وجرائم ضد الإنسانية، وخرق للقوانين الدولية، وانتهاك لميثاق اليونيسكو.

48.3 سيدي الرئيس، إننا في العالم اليوم نحتاج إلى موقف شجاع وحاسم من هذا المنتدى الثقافي الدولي لمحاصرة هذه الانتهاكات وللوقوف في وجه الإرهاب الذي أصبح يهدد المعالم الأثرية والحضارية التي لا تعوض وبواصل اعتدائه على التنوع الثقافي والتراث الإنساني.

48.4 إني، وباسم إيسيسكو أنشد هذا المؤتمر أن يتحمل مسؤوليته التاريخية والإنسانية والقانونية لحماية حقوق الشعوب للضظهدة في الحرية والكرامة والتربية والثقافة والعلوم، حفاظاً على الأمن والسلم الدوليين في العالم أجمع. وتحقيقاً لرسالة اليونسكو الخالدة التي تنص على بناء حصون السلام في عقول البشر. لقد تخدمت هذه الحصون وتداعت كما نرى اليوم في كثير من مناطق العالم، وأصبح مجلس الأمن الدولي الذي عهد عليه مسؤوليات حفظ الأمن والسلم في العالم، عاجزاً عن حماية حقوق الشعوب وعن نشر السلم والأمن في العالم. فلتنهضوا أنتم في هذا المؤتمر الثقافي الإنساني للقيام بهذه المسؤولية التاريخية للقيام بهذه المسؤولية التاريخية بوقف الاعتداءات. شكراً لكم، والسلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته.

49. The President:

Thank you very much, Your Excellency. Our next speaker is His Excellency Dr Abdullah Hamed Muhareb, Director-General of the Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization. Your Excellency, you have the floor.

50.1 السيد محارب (أليكسو):

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم حمد لله والصلاة والسلام على رسول الله، السيد رئيس المؤتمر العام، السيد رئيس نائب رئيس المؤتمر، السيدات والسادة، أصحاب المعالي والسعادة. إنه لمن دواعي السرور أن نكون اليوم معاً في الذكرى السبعين لتأسيس اليونسكو ومنظمة الأمم المتحدة. وأن آخذ الكلمة باسم المنظمة العربية للتربية والثقافة والعلوم لتقديم التحية لكافة الأجيال التي تعاقبت على إدارة اليونسكو لنشر رسالتها المتمثلة أساساً في ترسيخ السلم والأمن وتحقيق التنمية في العالم عبر التربية والثقافة والعلم.

50.2 أيها السيدات والسادة، إنه من الواجبة أن نقول إن أهدافنا في التربية والثقافة والعلم والتواصل والتنمية التي نطلبها من أجل حياة كريمة للجميع لا يمكن أن تتحقق كاملة إلا بمشاركة حقيقية متعددة الأطراف. ولكنني أظن أنه لا يقل عن هذا القول وجاهة التساؤل عن حدود معنى هذه المشاركة في عالم يقتل ويشرد فيه الاحتلال والإرهاب الملايين من الأطفال والنساء والرجال، وتدمر المدن والقرى وتهدم فيه الدور والمدارس على من فيها. في عالم تنسف فيه شواهد التاريخ والحضارة من معالم وآثار، وهي كنوز البشرية التي لا تقدر بثمن.

50.3 إن الملايين في فلسطين يقاسون منذ عقود من الزمن ظلم الاحتلال الإسرائيلي وبشاعة جرائمه وانتهاكه السافر لمقدساتهم وأعراضهم واغتصابه لحقوقهم. متجاهلاً كل القرارات الدولية والمعاهدات والمواثيق الأممية. وعلى اليونسكو أن تواصل وقوفها مع الحق والتزامها رسالتها وأن لا تتردد لحظة في إدانة الاحتلال، وأن تعمل على تنفيذ قراراتها بشأن الأراضي الفلسطينية المحتلة وحماية المعالم التاريخية وصيانتها على اعتبار أنها من التراث الإنساني وجزء من ذاكرة البشرية. لقد اكتونيا في السنوات الأخيرة بظاهرة التطرف والإرهاب التي جاءت على منطقتنا العربية بالقتل والتخريب وتدمير المدارس والجامعات ودور العبادة والمصانع والمواقع الأثرية فخلفت وما زالت تخلف وراءها الملايين من الضحايا من القتلى والجرحى واللاجئين من الأطفال والنساء والشباب والرجال. والواجب يدعونا اليوم أن نتصدى لهذه الظاهرة الغربية عن ثقافتنا العربية الإسلامية وقيمنا الإنسانية ونقاومها بجميع الوسائل. وأعتقد أن الفكر والحوار التبادل والثقافة والتربية والتعليم الجيد والمنصف للجميع هي من أهم الوسائل للتصدي للتطرف والعنف والإرهاب شريطة أن تتوفر لها الموارد البشرية الضرورية حتى تكون ناجعة ومستدامة.

50.4 أيها السيدات والسادة، كيف الطريق إلى المستقبل، مستقبل الأفراد والشعوب، مستقبل الإنسانية لا خوف ولا حزن؟ كيف نغير العالم نحو الأفضل؟ وكيف السبيل إلى انجلاء الليل وانكسار القيد؟ إني أعتقد مثل كثير من الناس أننا نحتاج إلى سلوك جماعي يوجهه فكر إنساني عميق وإرادة صادقة وسياسة تحتكم إلى المبادئ والقيم الكونية، سياسة تقاوم الظلم بجميع أشكاله ومهما كانت مصادره وتنبذ العنصرية وترفض الإصرار من بعض الدول المتقدمة على بعض الدول أخرى متخلفة لتنفيذ أجندة سياسية معينة يعيش فيها الجميع وفق تعاقب جديد. شكراً جزيلاً على حسن إصناتكم، والسلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته.

51. The President:

Thank you very much, Your Excellency. Our next speaker is His Excellency Dr Ali Al Karni, Director-General of the Arab Bureau of Education for the Gulf States. Your Excellency, you have the floor.

52.1 السيد القرني (مكتب التربية العربي لدول الخليج):

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم، السيد رئيس المؤتمر العام، السيد رئيس المجلس التنفيذي، السيدة المدير العام لليونسكو، أصحاب المعالي والسعادة، السيدات والسادة، السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته. فإنا نلتقي اليوم على مائدة مليئة بالعطاءات، لكنها مليئة أيضاً بالتحديات. وكما يسر الدول الأعضاء في مكتب التربية العربي لدول الخليج أن تشارك، بل تتكامل جهودها مع ما يبذله العالم كله من جهود، من أجل عالم أكثر تعاوناً وعلماً، وأشرق حضارة وأمناً. من أجل ذلك، أولت دولنا الأولوية للتنمية، وخصصت لها ميزانيات سخية، إيماناً من قيادتها الرشيدة، بأن الاستثمار المستدام لا يكون إلا في الإنسان، لا في أي عنوان آخر محدود العطاء والبقاء.

52.2 لقد خطت الدول الأعضاء بمكتب التربية العربي لدول الخليج خطوات واسعة ضمن معايير التعليم للجميع، وقد أظهر التقرير الختامي للتعليم للجميع 2015 وفاء دولنا بمعظم الأهداف. وتتركز الخطط الاستراتيجية الجديدة على معيار النوعية الذي يعني بتطوير مستوى مخزجات التعليم وتجويدها. كما كَتَّف مكتب التربية العربي لدول الخليج خلال الفترة الماضية جهوده للإسهام مع وزارات التربية والتعليم في الدول الأعضاء في تجويد التعليم. وكما تم في هذا الشأن توثيق العلاقة التعاونية مع منظمة اليونسكو، والتشارك عبر مكاتبها الإقليمية في كل من بيروت والدوحة، في دعم عمليات الرصد والمتابعة للتعليم للجميع، والتحضير للفعاليات الإقليمية التي سبقت المنتدى العالمي للتعليم 2030. وهنا أؤكد أن مكتب التربية العربي، ووفقاً لاستراتيجية العمل للسنوات الخمس القادمة، سيعمل مع اليونسكو على رفع قدرات فرق العمل في برامج الرصد والتقييم لبرامج التعليم 2030 مع المركز الرئيسي. والمراكز المتخصصة مثل UIS, IBE وكذلك المكاتب الإقليمية. إننا لعلنا ثقة بأن اليونسكو قد بنت خبرة تراكمية من خلال برامج الرصد والمتابعة للتعليم للجميع، إلا أننا نرغب في أن تكون مؤشرات التعليم 2030 أكثر وضوحاً، وقابلة للقياس، لتعبر عن حالات التعليم، ومستوى الجودة، عبر المستويين، الأفقي والرأسي للتعليم.

52.3 إننا ندرك يقيناً أن تحديات الإرهاب والتطرف يجب ألا يكون غائبة عن وعينا، ونحن نخطط لأعمال المستقبل، لذا سعى المكتب مع الدول الأعضاء لاستحداث برامج موجهة، مثل الثقافة الإعلامية، والتربية الأسرية، وبرامج الأنشطة الموجهة للشباب. إن مكتب التربية العربي لدول الخليج، وهو يفاخر بأن علاقته الاستراتيجية مع اليونسكو قد أثمرت الكثير من الإنجازات، مثلما ستوضحه المراجعة نصفية لبرامج مذكرة التفاهم. فإنا نعتز أيضاً بأن المكتب قد فتح خطأً مع شركاء غير تقليديين مثل OECD، ومنظمات المجتمع المدني والقطاع الخاص. شكراً لكم، والسلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته.

53. The President:

Thank you very much, Your Excellency. Our next speaker is His Excellency, Mr Slimane Chikh, Permanent Observer of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation to the United Nations Office. Your Excellency, you have the floor.

54.1 **M. Chikh** (OCI) :

Monsieur le Président de la Conférence générale, Madame la Directrice générale de l'UNESCO, Monsieur le Président du Conseil exécutif, Mesdames et Messieurs, j'ai l'honneur de délivrer le message du Secrétaire général de l'OCI, S. E. M. Iyad Ameen Madani mais compte tenu du temps imparti, je me permets de résumer ce discours qui sera par ailleurs distribué *in extenso*.

54.2 Le respect mutuel et la tolérance sont les piliers fondamentaux qui nous permettent d'apprécier la diversité culturelle et de mieux comprendre le phénomène de la fécondation croisée des civilisations. Ce principe doit être inculqué aux nouvelles générations au moyen de l'éducation. C'est pourquoi nous tenons à saluer le travail remarquable et les efforts inlassables de l'UNESCO pour la promotion de l'éducation aux droits de l'homme à travers le monde, et pour le développement de nouvelles formes d'éducation à la citoyenneté mondiale. L'OCI partage entièrement cette vision et elle agit en conséquence.

54.3 Mesdames et Messieurs, la lutte contre le phénomène du terrorisme, de l'extrémisme religieux figure parmi les priorités de l'OCI qui estime que la stratégie la plus efficace pour lutter contre l'extrémisme violent consiste à traiter les causes profondes du phénomène. Elle réaffirme, comme l'énoncent tous les traités pertinents et toutes les résolutions internationales, que le terrorisme n'a ni religion ni nationalité ni race, et que nous avons affaire à un fléau qui doit être combattu et réprimé partout où il frappe. Aussi, l'OCI rejette toute tentative visant à entreprendre l'amalgame entre le terrorisme et l'Islam.

54.4 Mesdames et Messieurs, le monde a également assisté à la recrudescence d'actes de destruction intentionnelle et du trafic illicite du patrimoine culturel, notamment dans le but de financer les activités des groupes terroristes. L'OCI condamne fermement ces crimes perpétrés au nom de certaines idéologies destructrices et se tient prêt à coopérer avec l'UNESCO pour la sauvegarde du patrimoine culturel. À cet égard, l'OCI a souligné l'importance cruciale de la Déclaration de Milan sur la protection du patrimoine culturel ainsi que le travail remarquable de l'UNESCO en la matière.

54.5 Mesdames et Messieurs, permettez-moi de saisir cette occasion pour parler de deux autres dossiers qui me paraissent importants. En premier lieu, l'OCI souhaite réitérer ici son soutien sans faille au peuple palestinien dans la situation tragique où il se trouve aujourd'hui. Nous condamnons fermement le processus systématique d'altération des caractéristiques distinctives de la ville sainte de Jérusalem-Est occupée et les fouilles menées en contrebas de la Sainte mosquée d'Al-Aqsa. L'UNESCO a la responsabilité de protéger et préserver le patrimoine culturel de Jérusalem-Est, et nous réitérons ici notre appel vibrant à appliquer la décision d'envoi d'une mission de suivi réactive de l'UNESCO dans la Vieille Ville de Jérusalem. En second lieu, l'OCI se félicite du vote du Conseil exécutif en faveur de la candidature du Kosovo pour la pleine adhésion à l'UNESCO et espère que la Conférence générale adoptera la recommandation du Conseil exécutif.

54.6 Mesdames et Messieurs, je voudrais conclure en réaffirmant l'intérêt constant de l'OCI à renforcer davantage la coopération avec l'UNESCO. La prise en charge de la question liée à la promotion du dialogue interculturel doit nous engager à œuvrer ensemble. Je vous remercie.

55. **The President:**

Thank you very much Your Excellency. Our next speaker is Her Excellency Ms Maria Theresa Lazaro, Chairperson of the Group of 77 and China. Your Excellency, you have the floor.

56.1 **Ms Lazaro** (Chairperson of the Group 77 and China):

Mr President, Excellencies, this statement is based on the Group of 77 and China's declaration on the 70th anniversary of UNESCO, "Building Peace and Promoting Sustainable Development for a Better World," which was adopted on 30 October 2015 and distributed to all Permanent Delegations.

56.2 The Group of 77 and China affirm that UNESCO plays an indispensable role in creating the conditions for lasting peace in the hearts and minds of women and men, without which there can be no sustainable development. In the wake of pressing global challenges, UNESCO's purpose is to promote mutual understanding, dialogue among cultures, the culture of peace, and international cooperation in the fields of education, the natural and social sciences, culture, and communication and information, remains as important as ever.

56.3 To fulfil its crucial role, UNESCO must proactively contribute to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, to help eradicate poverty, malnutrition, climate change, violence, and conflicts. We envision a UNESCO that is empowered to affect positive change on the ground and make a lasting difference in the lives of the most vulnerable and those in most need, especially in least developed countries (LDCs) and small island developing States (SIDS).

56.4 The Organization must respond to the needs of Member States through capacity building, technical assistance, technology transfer, development cooperation, and policy advice across all five programme sectors and the global priorities of Africa and gender equality. We are committed to the 2030 Education Framework for Action agenda and UNESCO's role in its implementation. Quality and inclusive education is a human right and a pathway to ensuring peace and sustainable development.

56.5 We look forward to a successful 21st Conference of Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP 21). We appeal that UNESCO increases its cooperation and assistance to Member States most vulnerable to climate change and natural disasters through relevant bodies and programmes, especially in the natural and social sciences.

56.6 We reaffirm that culture is an enabler and driver of sustainable development. We reiterate the importance of UNESCO's cultural conventions and their full implementation through achieving a representative, balanced and credible World Heritage List, safeguarding the intangible and underwater cultural heritage and promoting the diversity of cultural expressions. We strongly condemn the deliberate destruction of cultural heritage, including religious sites, by terrorist

organizations in Iraq, Syrian Arab Republic, Yemen, Mali, Libya, and Tunisia, as well as the trafficking and sale of cultural property. We urge that protection of cultural heritage, especially in the event of armed conflict, be enhanced, and commend the Bonn Declaration and UNESCO's "#Unite4Heritage" campaign and strategy.

56.7 Relevant UNESCO programmes should further address the digital divide and harness information and communications technology. We call on UNESCO to redouble its efforts in favour of the youth to empower them to be productive global citizens and to reinforce social inclusion, peace, intercultural dialogue, and mutual understanding. In conclusion, the G-77 shall continue to extend support to UNESCO. Thank you very much.

57. **The President:**

Thank you very much, Your Excellency. Our next speaker is Ms Martine Levy, President of the NGO-UNESCO Liaison Committee

58.1 **Mme Lévy** (Comité de liaison ONG UNESCO) :

Merci, Monsieur le Président. Monsieur le Président de la Conférence générale, Excellences, Mesdames et Messieurs, lors de la session d'ouverture de cette 38^e Conférence générale, M. Hao Ping s'est félicité de voir que les États membres et le Secrétariat avaient permis de faire ensemble les réformes nécessaires depuis 2013. Et je me suis posé cette question, en tant que Présidente de la Conférence internationale des ONG partenaires de l'UNESCO : « Quelle a été la contribution des ONG dans cette réforme ? ». La réponse est venue par la voix du Président du Conseil exécutif, S. E. M. Amr, qui a loué avec force et conviction la coopération avec les ONG : « Leur action est la preuve que nous pouvons coopérer pour la Paix », a-t-il ajouté.

58.2 Les ONG, vous le savez, travaillent sur le terrain ; leurs militants sont au plus près des populations ; et le constat est que, malgré tous les efforts prodigués par les uns ou par les autres, la situation est très préoccupante. Il nous reste encore beaucoup à faire mais nous ne baisserons pas les bras malgré toutes les difficultés de tous ordres qui se dressent devant nous. Avez-vous déjà vu un militant d'une ONG ne pas vouloir aller au bout de son engagement ?

58.3 Mme la Directrice générale, dans son discours d'ouverture de cette Conférence, a dit : « Je vous fais cette demande solennelle : faire avancer l'éducation de chaque enfant, particulièrement des filles ». Le Comité de liaison réfléchit à célébrer le 11 octobre 2016 la *Journée internationale des filles*, qui a été promulguée par les Nations Unies pour lutter pour le droit à l'éducation des filles qui est un enjeu majeur. Comment accéder à la paix lorsque la pauvreté règne dans une famille, cette pauvreté qui atteint surtout les femmes ? Est-ce par le combat des femmes par elles-mêmes que la pauvreté diminuerait ? Le Comité de liaison a permis à 300 personnes de toutes les régions de l'UNESCO de se réunir au Siège en juin 2015 et de réfléchir au rôle des femmes dans la lutte contre la pauvreté. Le constat est amer. La condition de la femme n'a pas progressé voire a régressé depuis la Conférence mondiale sur les femmes, de Beijing, en 1995. Cette situation dramatique est inadmissible au XXI^e siècle et nous continuerons à travailler tous ensemble pour la faire évoluer.

58.4 Excellences, Mesdames et Messieurs, l'une des causes de la pauvreté est le manque d'eau potable en 2014. Et je tiens à remercier tout particulièrement ici le Gouvernement de la Côte d'Ivoire qui a accepté pour la première fois d'être le premier pays à organiser un forum hors Siège. Ce forum a eu lieu à Yamoussoukro l'année dernière sur l'accès à l'eau potable pour tous. Or, cette année, en 2015, nous avons rassemblé environ 200 personnes en Chine, et je tiens à remercier le Gouvernement chinois pour le forum qui a eu lieu sur le « Rapprochement des cultures : une seule humanité au-delà des diversités ». Un autre forum a rassemblé 150 personnes sur la sauvegarde du patrimoine culturel matériel et immatériel en Bulgarie. Je tiens à remercier le Gouvernement bulgare pour cette organisation. Je vous remercie pour votre attention.

59. **The President:**

Thank you very much Madam. Our next speaker is Mr Patrick Gallaud, Representative of the French Association of Friendship and Liaison

60.1 **M. Gallaud** (Association francophone d'amitié et de liaison – AFAL) :

Monsieur le Président de la Conférence générale, Excellences, Mesdames, Messieurs, chers amis de la société civile, l'Association francophone d'amitié et de liaison (AFAL) est heureuse de s'adresser aux délégués de la 38^e session de la Conférence générale de l'UNESCO, en vue de leur présenter brièvement quelques réflexions sur le projet de programme et de budget de l'UNESCO pour les deux années à venir.

60.2 L'AFAL est une ONG partenaire de l'UNESCO depuis 1991 et est également en consultation permanente avec l'Organisation internationale de la francophonie, le Conseil de l'Europe et l'ONU. Avec l'UNESCO, il s'agit d'une coopération étroite, notamment depuis 2012, où l'AFAL a présenté et soutenu avec succès un candidat à la présidence de la conférence des ONG et du Comité de liaison ONG-UNESCO. En effet, au moment où l'UNESCO entreprenait une importante réforme de fond concernant les ONG, l'AFAL avait tenu à accompagner cette mutation qui, à la lecture du rapport quadriennal présenté par la Directrice générale, a déjà porté ses fruits.

60.3 L'AFAL réunit, sur les cinq continents, des centaines d'associations ayant en commun l'usage de la langue française. Il ne s'agit en aucun cas d'une ONG corporatiste mais d'une organisation qui souhaite protéger et étendre l'usage de la langue française porteuse, comme toute autre langue, de valeurs universelles. J'en veux pour preuve la réussite récente de l'exposition intitulée « La francophonie s'affiche », regroupant près de 100 des plus belles affiches illustrant des manifestations du monde francophone depuis une quarantaine d'années. Il s'agit d'un voyage à travers l'espace et le temps évoquant une multitude de forums, de rencontres, festivals de films, mettant en évidence le rôle déterminant de la francophonie dans la diversité culturelle, la dynamique associative, la promotion de la langue française.

60.4 Il est clair que les objectifs de l'AFAL rejoignent très largement ceux de l'UNESCO : on vient de le voir pour la diversité culturelle, mais d'autres exemples pourraient être pris dans la culture de la paix et de la non-violence, la promotion des droits de l'homme, la coalition des villes contre le racisme, le réseau des villes créatrices, le

rapprochement des cultures. L'AFAL est particulièrement attentive à la priorité globale Afrique : en effet, on estime à 350 millions le nombre de jeunes Africains qui parleront français dans les années à venir ; on sait bien, par ailleurs, que l'Afrique sera essentielle à l'économie mondiale avec un fort taux de croissance. Le cœur de la francophonie sera donc en Afrique. Et l'AFAL soutient donc sans réserve le projet de programme de l'UNESCO 2016-2017 relatif à la coordination et au suivi de l'action en faveur de l'Afrique.

60.5 Monsieur le Président, Mesdames, Messieurs, notre Organisation francophone apparaît donc bien comme porteuse d'idéaux universels, notamment à travers l'usage de la langue française. Elle engage un combat quotidien, non seulement pour la préservation de la langue française mais pour la préservation de toutes les langues du monde. C'est ce que rappelait récemment son président, Jacques Godfrain, quand il disait : « Les langues sont aussi patrimoniales que les pierres sculptées, les œuvres musicales, les dessins et les peintures », et c'est pour ça que nous continuerons à travailler auprès de l'UNESCO. Merci pour votre attention.

61. **The President:**

Thank you very much. Our next speaker is Mr Dhirendra Bhatnagar, Representative of the World Federation of UNESCO Clubs, Centres and Associations

62.1 **Mr Bhatnagar** (World Federation of UNESCO Clubs, Centres and Associations – WFUCA):

Honourable President of the General Conference, Honourable Director-General, Mr Chair of the Executive Board, distinguished delegates, friends and colleagues of the UNESCO Clubs movement, ladies and gentlemen. It is great pleasure for me to represent the World Federation of UNESCO Clubs, Centres and Associations (WFUCA) as its President at the 38th session of the General Conference of UNESCO. The UNESCO Club movement, which was started first in Japan in 1947 almost immediately after the formation of UNESCO to disseminate the ideals of UNESCO among the people, has now spread to about 100 countries in all continents of the world. Today, there are more than 5,000 UNESCO Clubs and Associations engaged in popularizing the programmes and activities of UNESCO among the people in their respective countries. Started as a small initiative by an individual, it has grown into a strong worldwide movement.

62.2 WFUCA, established in 1981 with the objective of furthering the ideals of UNESCO, is making sincere efforts to reach people at the grass-roots level, through its member UNESCO Clubs and Associations. WFUCA is an association of national federations of UNESCO Clubs, Centres and Associations, admitted as members on recommendation of the National Commission of UNESCO of their respective countries. WFUCA develops programmes based on UNESCO's priority themes such as education for sustainable development, culture of peace, and rapprochement of cultures, and so forth, as well as other areas which are in conformity with the mandate of UNESCO. WFUCA enjoys the status of a non-governmental organization (NGO) in official partnership with UNESCO.

62.3 On the global screen, a very complex and contradictory world scenario is displayed. On one hand, there is tremendous progress in science and technology, be it the medical or computer sciences, space technology, communication and transportation, to name but a few. On the other hand, conflicts, terrorism, intolerance, discrimination, disparities, inflation, population explosion, climate change, escalation of natural calamities triggered by the human behaviour and over-exploitation of natural resources have posed unprecedented challenges before humanity, forcing urgent attention of the world community. Never before has the need been felt so desperately to sensitize people about the problems and challenges to save this planet. Adoption of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is the clear manifestation of the concerns of the world community.

62.4 The overwhelming and comprehensive goals set up by the world leaders cannot be achieved without spreading awareness and urging active involvement of people of all ages, including the young. Renewed efforts should be made to revamp the dormant national federations of UNESCO Clubs and Associations. Cooperation and support of the National Commissions should be sought to open UNESCO Clubs and Associations in the countries where the movement does not exist to make it truly a people's movement for peace and tolerance. Greater emphasis should be given on opening the UNESCO Clubs in schools and colleges to involve a maximum number of young people to harness their energy and potential to develop the world to a better living place for peaceful coexistence. Thank you very much.

63. **The President:**

Thank you very much. Our next speaker is Mr Amadou Kane Beyé, International Council for Philosophy and Humanistic Studies. You have the floor, Sir.

64.1 **M. Beyé** (Conseil international de la philosophie et des sciences humaines) :

Monsieur le Président, chère Madame la Directrice générale de l'UNESCO, Mesdames et Messieurs, permettez-nous de vous féliciter au nom du secrétaire général, Luiz Oosterbeek, le président, M. Chao et l'ensemble du bureau pour votre élection. Je vais essayer de résumer en dépit du temps qui nous est imparti.

64.2 Le Conseil international de la philosophie et des sciences humaines, créé à la demande de l'UNESCO le 18 janvier 1949, s'adresse à cette Assemblée générale dans un contexte global d'inquiétudes, angoisses et ruptures qui doivent nous porter à une réflexion sur le rôle et les responsabilités de chaque institution ou discipline pour faire face à ces difficultés.

64.3 Ce fut dans ce sens que, déjà en octobre 2009, l'ancien Président du CIPSH a proposé, à cette même Assemblée générale, l'organisation d'une Conférence mondiale des humanités qui puisse organiser le secteur des sciences humaines dans le cadre du nouveau Millénaire. Une idée puissante, que l'UNESCO a accueillie et qui est désormais annoncée du 6 au 12 août 2017 dans la ville de Liège, en Belgique, en partenariat aussi avec le consortium « Liège Together ».

64.4 Il s'agit de s'adapter aux nouveaux défis et de chercher la convergence de nouvelles épistémologies avec la diversité des réponses culturelles aux changements globaux, pour une action ancrée sur une vision qui dépasse le court terme. Une action ancrée sur la créativité qui nous permet de construire des réponses nouvelles pour des difficultés nouvelles. Mais aussi une action ancrée sur la ferme croyance que la pensée et la connaissance restent le cœur de la

capacité des humains à se réinventer à chaque fois. Une action, finalement, qui rejette toute forme de pensée unique car notre force majeure, c'est la diversité de notre espèce qui commence entre genres et âges et se prolonge dans le caléidoscope de langues, de mœurs, voire même de valeurs : les cultures. En quoi consiste cette diversité à travers le temps et les espaces, et comment faire pour valoriser et renforcer cette diversité dans un cadre de convergence qui porte à une humanité dynamique et en paix.

64.5 L'UNESCO a identifié les principaux défis d'une « planète en transition » : l'augmentation de la population ; la recomposition des territoires ; les flux migratoires ; les contraintes énergétiques et environnementales des territoires ; l'uniformisation culturelle dans un contexte de mondialisation et, à l'inverse, la structuration de nouvelles identités ; l'avènement de notre mondialisation ; l'avènement de la société numérique et... pour finir...

The meeting was suspended from 1.10 p.m. to 1.15 p.m. while the speaker received medical attention.

65. **The President:**

Thank you very much Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen. We can proceed with our meeting and the good news is that Mr Amadou is well and is doing fine. The next speaker is Ms Christine Roche, President of the International Catholic Centre for Cooperation with UNESCO. Madam, you have the floor.

66.1 **Mme Roche** (Centre catholique international de coopération avec l'UNESCO – CCIC) :

Merci, Monsieur le Président. Monsieur le Président, Excellences, Mesdames et Messieurs, « L'éducation est un cri d'amour pour l'enfance, pour la jeunesse que nous devons accueillir dans nos sociétés, (...) dans la famille, dans la communauté de base, dans la nation ». Je cite le Rapport Delors, UNESCO, 1996, « L'éducation : un trésor est caché dedans ».

66.2 L'éducation est mission de cœur et de raison pour l'UNESCO. Pour preuve, l'adoption par acclamation du cadre d'action Éducation 2030, dont l'UNESCO est le chef de file et coordinatrice de l'agenda. Le Centre catholique de coopération avec l'UNESCO remercie et soutient les acteurs de cette grande Maison qui s'engagent, depuis 70 ans, pour que l'éducation soit de fait un bien commun mondial.

66.3 L'éducation est un défi quotidien pour les citoyens, pour les parents responsables et exigeants, conscients du devenir de la société. L'éducation se fait « tout au long de la vie » dès la petite enfance. Elle construit la personne et forme l'individu au vivre ensemble. Débutant au sein de la famille, elle se poursuit avec le concours de l'école, de l'environnement social puis professionnel.

66.4 La responsabilité de l'éducation des enfants et des adolescents se partage entre États et organisations de la société civile. Les familles « cœur de nos sociétés » – selon la Déclaration de l'ONU, en 1994 – et États organisateurs et garants de la société civile sont des partenaires complémentaires pour développer un humanisme commun responsable. Les familles où le « prendre soin de l'autre » est fondamental pour la vie.

66.5 S'appuyant sur le cadre d'action Éducation 2030, le Centre catholique international de coopération avec l'UNESCO rappelle que l'État est le garant du droit à l'éducation – il n'a pas vocation à être le responsable exclusif de l'éducation ; affirme son attachement à la culture familiale – creuset de respect et d'amour de l'autre au moment où les jeunes générations doivent relever des défis sans précédent avec ceux qu'ont connus leurs aînés ; demande que les familles soient intégrées dans les organisations de la société civile déjà existantes ; rappelle les principes et les règles fixés par la Déclaration universelle des droits de l'homme et la Charte de l'ONU dont la liberté de conscience et de religion, valeur intangible et universelle pour tous les États membres.

66.6 C'est grâce au respect des peuples, au respect de la liberté et de la dignité des femmes et des hommes, grâce à une attention particulière aux enfants et aux personnes fragilisées que le goût de la paix et d'une harmonie de vie en commun se développera dans notre monde multiculturel en pleine mutation. Je vous remercie.

67. **The President:**

Thank you very much Madam. Ladies and gentlemen, I wish to inform you that the delegation of Armenia has asked for the right of reply to the statement made earlier this morning by Azerbaijan. In accordance with Rule 72 of our Rules of Procedure, I will accordingly accord the right to reply for two minutes. Your Excellency, the representative of Armenia, you now have the floor.

68.1 **Armenia:**

Thank you Mr President. The Azerbaijan representative yesterday was preaching about the necessity of not politicizing UNESCO, but today their own representative was doing the opposite, once again trying to drag UNESCO into political processes that are beyond this Organization's mandate. Speaking of historic Azerbaijan land is simply ironic. No one has ever come across an Azerbaijan on any historic map.

68.2 There was not a single true word in the Azerbaijani statement. When I say something, I speak with truth and evidence. Every historic monument in Armenia is preserved and protected by the Government regardless of its ethnic or religious belonging. But the attempt to incriminate Armenia in religious hatred makes no sense. Armenians have been living all over the world, peacefully co-existing with every nation and religion. Today, Armenia is home to 12 national minorities including many without a kin State.

68.3 Speaking of aggression, the only true aggressor is the Azerbaijani Government that practises hate speeches against anything Armenian, has organized massacres of Armenians in Baku, Sumgait, and Kirovabad and has launched a full-scale war against the peaceful population of Nagorno-Karabakh. The so-called multi-ethnic Azerbaijan has no Armenian population today. Despite the fact that in the beginning of the twentieth century, Baku was an Armenian, Russian and Jewish-populated city where all industry was started by Armenians. Every Armenian was either massacred or had to flee the country.

68.4 Thus no official of the most xenophobic State has any moral right to speak of tolerance, making totally false accusations. The model for today's cultural genocide in the Middle East began many years ago when Azerbaijan started a policy of cultural cleansing of Armenian culture. Monasteries, churches and cross-stones have been destroyed there. We have raised the issue of the destruction of several thousand Armenian cross-stones of the medieval Armenian cemetery in Nakhchivan on a number of occasions. UNESCO has the photo and video evidence of this destruction. In 2008, the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) 16th General Assembly adopted a resolution condemning the barbaric destruction of those monuments. The call contained therein to the Azerbaijani authorities to facilitate access of experts to study the site has been since rejected by Azerbaijan.

69. **The President:**

Thank you very much Your Excellency. Ladies and gentlemen we have also received a request from the delegation of Serbia asking for the right of reply to the statement made early this morning by Albania. Once again in accordance with Rule 72, I have exercised my discretion and decided to accord the right to reply for two minutes. Your Excellency, the Ambassador of Serbia, you now have the floor, Sir.

70.1 **Serbia:**

Thank you, Mr President. My delegation would like to reply to the statements made by the representative of Albania and a few other delegations in favour of Kosovo's membership of UNESCO. My task is the easy one. Everything that we heard from them speaks loudly against that membership. UNESCO is an organization that should be dealing with culture, education, and science and not a place for solving political issues of statehood. In the spirit of the Organization and its fundamental principles, we will propose the adjournment of the debate on the request of Kosovo for membership of UNESCO.

70.2 The aim of this proposal is to give a chance to the dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina in which also the issue of Serbian culture heritage in the province is yet to be discussed. I ask you to support the adjournment of the debate. This will help to avoid further divisions, politicization and confrontation within UNESCO. If this proposal is not accepted and it comes to a vote on the request of the so-called Republic of Kosovo to become a member of UNESCO, I appeal to you all to vote no. Your "no" will be your "yes" for the respect of international law and Resolution 1244 of the Security Council, for the dignity of UNESCO, for the dignity, sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Member States for the benefit of all. Vote no. Thank you.

71. **The President:**

Thank you very much Your Excellency for your statement. Ladies and gentlemen this statement concludes the general policy debate segment of the 38th session of the General Conference. One hundred and ninety-eight speakers participated in this debate including heads of State or government and other distinguished guests. It was an enriching debate and I can assure you that we have heard your wise remarks and your vision of UNESCO's work. The Director-General and her staff have followed closely what was said in this room over the past week, and she will deliver her reply on Monday morning at 10 o'clock sharp. I wish to thank you once again for your wisdom in speaking but equally for your attention in listening.

Report of the APX Commission on item 1.3 "Report by the Director-General on communications received from Member States invoking the provisions of Article IV.C, paragraph 8(c), of the Constitution"

72. **The President:**

Before we adjourn the meeting, we will examine the report of the APX Commission on item 1.3, "Report by the Director-General on communications received from Member States invoking the provisions of Article IV C, paragraph 8 (c) of the Constitution". Mr Chairman of the APX Commission, you now have the floor, Sir.

73.1 **Mr Sudders** (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland) (Chairperson of the APX Commission):

Thank you Mr President. Mr President of the General Conference, Mr Chair of the Executive Board, Madam Director-General, Excellencies. Please allow me to submit to you the report of the work of the APX Commission on item 1.3. Item 1.3 is the "Report of the Director-General on communications received from Member States invoking the provisions of Article IV C, paragraph 8 (c) of the Constitution". The relevant document was document 38 C/10 and Addendum. In accordance with Article 83 of the Rules of Procedure of the General Conference, the APX Commission started its work with the examination of communications received from Member States invoking the provisions of Article IV C, 8 (c) of the Constitution.

73.2 As is customary, we set up a working group in charge of the preparation of our recommendation. This group was chaired by Germany and composed of El Salvador, Germany, Oman, Philippines, Senegal and Slovenia, thus representing all electoral groups. The working group met four times from 4 to 6 November.

73.3 Mr President, I shall recall that the deadline for the submission of communications from Member States was Friday, 6 November at 10 a.m. All Members States that had submitted their communications by this date were permitted to continue to vote until such time that the General Conference in Plenary Meeting had otherwise decided on the basis of the report of the APX Commission.

73.4 At the time of the first meeting of 4 November at 1 p.m. the working group noted that 14 Member States were at risk of losing their voting rights. These were Antigua and Barbuda, Central African Republic, Comoros, Georgia, Israel, Kyrgyzstan, Libya, Micronesia, Sao Tome and Principe, Somalia, South Sudan, Tajikistan, the United States of America, and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of).

73.5 By Friday, 6 November at 10 a.m., of these 14, seven had presented within the time limit their communications requesting authorization to vote in conformity with Article IV paragraph 8 (c) of the Constitution. These seven were the Central African Republic, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Libya, Somalia South Sudan, and Tajikistan. The working group felt that more information was needed from four Member States and decided to invite their representatives. All accepted this

invitation. The working group was also informed that payment from the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela was duly received and thus, Venezuela is eligible for voting rights in this session of the General Conference.

73.6 Mr President, the members of the working group carried out a thorough case-by-case basis analysis of the information presented by those seven countries for its consideration. The conclusions of the working group were then presented by its Chair to the APX Commission at its session yesterday afternoon, Friday, 6 November.

73.7 The APX Commission, after careful examination of the conclusions of the working group, gave favourable consideration to the requests of Central African Republic, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Libya, Somalia, South Sudan and Tajikistan, thus all seven who sent a communication which were deemed in accordance with the provisions of Article 83 of the Rules of Procedure of the General Conference, and 30 C/Resolution 82. As such, the APX Commission has recommended that these Member States retain their right to vote.

73.8 Finally Mr President, and just for information at this stage, on the basis of the work accomplished, the working group has made recommendations on possible modifications of the mandate and working methods of the working group for future sessions of the General Conference. This will be examined on Monday, 9 November, in the afternoon, by the APX Commission and I will report on the outcome when I present my oral report on APX at the plenary on 13 November.

73.9 Mr President, in my capacity as Chairperson of the APX Commission, I am submitting the resolution recommended by the APX Commission for adoption by the plenary meeting of the General Conference. With your indulgence, I propose that this decision be taken without debate. Thank you for your attention.

74. **The President:**

Thank you very much Mr Sudders. Dear colleagues, may I consider that the General Conference approves by consensus the recommendations made by the APX Commission. I see no objection. *It is so **decided**.*

Second report by the Chairperson of the Credentials Committee

75. **The President:**

Following the reports of the Credentials Committee on the valid credentials submitted today, and that of the Chairperson of the APX Commission, that the General Conference has just received, I shall now read the list of Member States that will not have the right to vote at the 38th session of the General Conference. My apologies. I have to call upon the Chairperson of the Credentials Committee first of all. My apologies, Madam Chairperson, you will now have the floor so that we can we can benefit from your report.

76.1 **Ms Mariam Katagum** (Nigeria) (Chairperson of the Credentials Committee):

Thank you Mr President. Mr President of the General Conference, Mr Chair of the Executive Board, Madam Director-General, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen. I have the honour to present the second report of the Chairperson of the Credentials Committee. Since my first report was submitted in plenary on 5 November 2015, the Committee has received credentials in due form from the delegations of the Member States whose names are displayed on the screen. The Committee has also received the credentials in due form from the delegation of the Member States which had previously submitted provisional credentials and whose names are displayed on the screen.

76.2 The Committee has also received the provisional credentials from the delegation of the Member State whose name is displayed on the screen. In conformity with the authority delegated to me by the Credentials Committee, I propose that the General Conference accepts these credentials. The delegations of the Member States whose names are displayed on the screen have not yet submitted credentials. The delegations of the Associate Members whose names are displayed on the screen have not yet submitted credentials. The Observer delegation whose name is displayed on the screen has not yet submitted credentials. I thank you, Mr President.

77.1 **The President:**

Thank you very much Madam Chairperson of the Credentials Committee. Now, following the reports by the Chairperson of the Credentials Committee on the valid credentials submitted to date, and that of the Chairperson of the APX Commission that the General Conference has just received, I shall now proceed and read the list of Member States that will not have the right to vote at this 38th session of the General Conference. These Member States are: Antigua and Barbuda, Comoros, Dominica, Israel, Kiribati, Micronesia, Niue, Sao Tome and Principe, and the United States of America. Are there any comments or any observations, please? I see none. Thank you very much.

77.2 Ladies and gentlemen, we have concluded our work for today and I am sure that you will be pleased to learn that there will be no plenary meeting this afternoon, thanks to your efficiency, cooperation and understanding. The plenary meeting of the General Conference will convene on Monday at 10 o'clock sharp, when we will hear the Director-General reply to the general policy debate. Until then, I hope you enjoy your weekend, but before I officially close this meeting, I re-engaged Dr Anthony so that he can today lead us in the rendition of the song "We are the world". This time around he has agreed to honour our contract and I now invite him to do exactly that, so that he can send us off in good spirits. Doctor, the floor is all yours, Sir.

78. **Belize:**

Thank you Mr President. We are now going to sing the first verse and the chorus of "We are the World" and I would invite you when I get to the chorus that you can sing along with me too. And if you want to hold your hands and sway, you can also do that.

(The assembly joined in a rendition of the song "We are the World")

79. **The President:**

Thank you. I see Brazil is asking for the floor. Yes, you have the floor.

80. **Brazil:**

Thank you Mr Chair. After this beautiful display of goodwill, I would mention one of the lines of the verses says that life is the greatest gift of all. And I would only wish that the United Nations system would stop promoting abortion in the world. There is a vicious campaign at this moment going on in my country to make abortion legal and I would ask all the people who like children and who think that life is the greatest gift of all to raise their voices against the killing of babies. Thank you.

The meeting rose at 1.40 p.m.