

**STATEMENT BY DR. ALLAN K. BIRABI, UGANDA'S
REPRESENTATIVE AT 201ST UNESCO EXECUTIVE BOARD SESSION,
APRIL 25, 2017**

The Chairperson;

Excellences;

All protocol observed;

Ladies and Gentlemen.

On behalf of the Government, and the People of Uganda, and on my own behalf, I have the honour to express most profound salutations and best wishes to this 201st Session of the Executive Board.

Permit me, colleagues, to highlight this season when the distinguished Republic of France, our UNESCO host country, conducts its Presidential polls while UNESCO also proliferates electing its new Director General. In the two activities, Uganda has an abiding interest with hope that the outcomes shall up-scale systems of world order, greater multilateralism, free of hatred, mistrust, terrorism, extremism, and wars. Hence, your Excellences, the Delegation of Uganda wishes the Republic of France and UNESCO, happy and peaceful 2017 election processes.

Your Excellences, since our last session in October 2016, Uganda has enjoyed an exciting flow of UNESCO currents.

In the field of Education; my Delegation is pleased to report the maturation of equipping Teacher Education with relevant ICT Competences as pedagogical tools for professional development. Powered by Chinese Funds-in-Trust-to-UNESCO since 2014, this project has heightened literacy and proficiency among science subjects in Uganda's educational institutions. Officially handed over to Uganda Government by the His Excellency Zheng Zhuqiang, the Chinese Ambassador to

Uganda in March 2017, the project has yielded ICT and studio equipment, developed a learner management system and several teacher training modules and manuals, and facilitated varied capacity building programs, and teacher-educator-exchange schemes across Uganda's teacher training colleges, and it is propelling SDG No. 4, to "*Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all*". Excellences, Uganda thanks the Chinese government, and its 2nd phase is in the offing.

My Delegation is also pleased to report that the Asia Pacific Centre of Education for International Understanding, Uganda National Commission for UNESCO, and the National Curriculum Development Centre are implementing a 2nd phase of a new project to integrate 'Global Citizenship Education' into local curricula and produce associated teaching-learning materials. The 1st phase, which involved a situational analysis and a capacity building workshop succeeded. Uganda would like to appreciate the 'International Bureau of Education' and the 'Asia Pacific Centre of Education for International Understanding' in this endeavour.

Furthermore, in a national response to the 2006 UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Uganda is in a rigorous bid to adopt barrier-free built environments empathetic to neglected persons with disabilities. Hence, Makerere University is piloting a special national curriculum for infusing Universal Design in architectural education supported by UNATCOM, the Uganda National Action on Physical Disability (UNAPD) and the New York-based Disability Rights Advocacy Fund (DRAF). The Disability Rights Advocacy Fund has offered a USD 84,000 grant for this cause for a 2-year period since last year, to which we are grateful.

Your Excellences, I am also happy to inform that a team of academics, intellectuals and technocrats is mapping out potential sites of biodiversity and ecological importance so as to protect and gazette them as heritage sites for sustainability and posterity.

In cultural matters; Uganda is operationalizing the development of a suitable Training Manual for enhancing creative skills of handicraft artisans. Powered from a 128,760 USD package of Korean Funds-in-Trust to UNESCO, via Ugandan National Commission for UNESCO, the Training Manual, which should be out soon, targets improving the productivity of Uganda's rural crafticians, their economic empowerment and sustainable development. Once again, the Ugandan Delegation commends the South Korean government for its generosity.

My Delegation would also like to appreciate the Japanese Funds-in-Trust-to-UNESCO for the financial and technical support for restoring the World Heritage Site of Kasubi Tombs, which was gutted by fire in 2010. Completion of its roof thatch is ongoing and a grand Conservation Management Plan is also in the offing as recommended by the World Heritage Committee and a search for Technical expertise for its implementation is under way.

On Freedom of Expression; Preparations to mark World Press Freedom Day are underway. Two regional workshops for journalists aimed at improving their skills in reporting have been organized alongside a grand public rally to express the need for greater press freedom and media reporting in May 2017.

On the social and humanities frontier, Uganda deeply appreciates the recent visit of the UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador, Mr. Forest Whittaker, who raised the esteem of Refugees in Uganda.

Lastly, Your Excellences, the Uganda Delegation is in full support of Budgetary Framework Financing and associated fiscal and monetary policies poised for adoption by UNESCO.

I thank you all for an excellent audience!