

# National Statement of the Republic of Korea

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204<sup>th</sup> EXB of UNESCO

delivered by Hong, Seok-in, Director-General for Public Diplomacy and Cultural Affairs

Monsieur le Président du Conseil Exécutif, Madame la Directrice Générale, Excellences, Mesdames et Messieurs,

C'est pour moi un grand plaisir d'assister à la réunion du Conseil Exécutif. Je voudrais souhaiter la bienvenue aux nouveaux dirigeants de l'Organisation, y compris H.E. Monsieur Lee, Byong-hyun en tant que Président du Conseil Exécutif.

The 204<sup>th</sup> session takes place at a meaningful juncture. Over the coming week, we will see what we've accomplished in the last 4 years by examining the APIR for the first time. We will also draw up implementation plan of the 39 C/5 based on the IBF. They will consolidate pivotal role of UNESCO in implementing SDGs and dealing with global challenges.

Since its accession in 1950, Korea has actively participated in UNESCO to fulfill its mandate. Korea settled its due quickly and made the third largest voluntary contribution through 29 projects for the Organization. Korea and UNESCO are making coordinated efforts to organize cooperation mechanism for more effective and efficient partnership.

High on Korea's priority in UNESCO is the implementation of SDGs. I am proud that Korea has actively participated with UNESCO in adopting GCED as one of Goals in the belief that GCED for PVE-E and peace building is key to realize our mandates of overcoming conflicts and bringing peace to the world.

Among various cooperative areas between Korea and UNESCO, today I would like to emphasize three points:

First, Korean government is working for the preservation of world heritage. My government commissioned in cooperation with the World Heritage Center a thematic study of 'Interpretation of Sites of Memory'. It emphasizes

that if there are differing or even conflicting perceptions on the site of memory, especially when the property relates to the historic experiences of neighboring countries, they need to be addressed through interpretation that contains all contexts, historical past and present-day meanings. This spirit is well reflected in the decision of the World Heritage Committee in 2015, and the members of the Committee have an obligation to abide by the Decision. My government will continuously contribute to the development of the World Heritage program by hosting various events such as seminar on the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Korea's accession to the UNESCO World Heritage Convention.

Second, as a strong advocate, my government has been fully engaged in the development of MoW programme through the establishment of the first Category 2 center in CI sector in Cheongju, Korea and contribution to capacity-building activities. My delegation firmly believes that MoW programme, like others, should be guided by UNESCO's founding principle of respecting peace of mankind, human rights and dignity. It is a common responsibility of the member states and mankind to conserve universal values learned from historical experience and lessons and to pass them on to the future generation. In this context, Korea will continue its contribution to the ongoing process of comprehensive review.

Lastly, Korea is actively participating in strengthening private-public partnership in line with UNESCO's strategy for expanding partnerships to various stakeholders. Korean companies recently concluded MOUs with the Organization to invest in IGGP program and to support out-of-school children in ASEAN member countries for access to quality education, respectively. As top policy priority of the Korean government, Korea will continue to take active part in UNESCO to cooperate with civil society.

In closing, I believe that the strategic transformation led by Madame Director-General contribute to making better UNESCO and hope that core values like accountability, efficiency, credibility and flexibility on which she put great emphasis are protected under her leadership. Korea will remain an earnest partner of UNESCO. Thank you. Merci beaucoup.