

ST VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES
Speech 10 April 2018
204th session of UNESCO's Executive Board

Mr Chairman of the Executive Board,
Madame President of the General Conference,
Madame Director-General,
Distinguished Members of the Executive Board,
Excellencies, colleagues,

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines aligns itself with the statement made by Brazil on behalf of GRULAC.

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines thanks the Director General for her presentation and we are very hopeful that, in her role as Chief Administrative Officer, she will carry out the improvements that are necessary for the efficiency of the Organization and we wish her and her team every success.

The Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said and I quote:

« In a rapidly changing world, we cannot afford to have a slowly reforming UN development system. We must recognize this in an honest way. And we must act. And so in the end, ambition isn't really a choice. It is our only option». (end of quote)

It is time to act now. We are an ambitious UNESCO and we will continue to be as we strive to create a more efficient and effective Organization. UNESCO needs to be run with strict guidelines and rigorous governance. The Resolutions of the General Conference, the Recommendations of IOS and the External Auditor, as well as that of the Independent External Evaluation and of the Working Group on Governance are very pertinent to maximize efficiency, accountability, transparency and ethics. Many recommendations have been implemented and we're looking forward to seeing the implementation of those outstanding.

In document 204 EX/4, we note that all sectors agree on the need for a strong resources mobilization strategy, relevant quantitative and qualitative performance indicators and intersectoriality. The Section on the "*Way Forward*" would benefit from a more strategic approach at the major programmes' level. Measurable impact on the ground should be our objective. Therefore, the next C/5 should include specific indicators to measure country-level impact.

The resources mobilization strategy should be based on the needs and priorities of the countries. Saint Vincent and the Grenadines is looking forward to participating in the forthcoming Structured Financing Dialogue with partners and donors.

We also believe that an equitable distribution of human and financial resources between Headquarters and the field is needed. In line with the recommendations of the External Auditor, measures should be taken to make the

field network more efficient, thus enabling it to fully play its role together with National Commissions.

However, increasing financial resources is not the only crucial element for strengthening the Organization. Competent staff is our richness and its expertise our strength. Staff is urgently needed in the field offices. We note that there are many vacant positions and a lack in the expertise and tools needed to implement programmes. Kingston and Havana offices are particularly suffering from this.

We hope that the recruitment process will be modernized rapidly to remedy this problem, based on transparency, respect of regulations and equitable geographical distribution, as we believe that talents can be found everywhere.

As a Small Developing Island State, continuous action is needed to reduce vulnerability and increase resilience. St Vincent and the Grenadines follows the implementation of UNESCO's SIDS Action Plan and welcomes the intersectorial activities undertaken.

Following the SIDS Action Plan mid-term evaluation in 2018, an updated Action Plan based on specific indicators being developed by UNESCO's Institute of Statistics will be welcomed.

Mr Chairman, Inclusive Education and life-long learning continue to be the focus in my country. Additionally, integration of ICT's is crucial as we undertake curriculum review.

Youth represent more than half the population in the Caribbean and we welcome the proposal to set up Regional Youth Spaces to better engage with young people.

Finally, I would conclude by saying that UNESCO is a fantastic Organization which must continue to echo a culture of peace. Our responsibility is cooperation, focusing on our common commitment towards UNESCO's mandate and its role in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for a better world.

Thank you for your attention