



**3** Republic of Zimbabwe

**NATIONAL STATEMENT DELIVERED BY THE HEAD OF DELEGATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF ZIMBABWE, HONOURABLE PROFESSOR JONATHAN N. MOYO AT THE 39<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE GENERAL CONFERENCE OF UNESCO**

- The President of the General Conference;
- The Chairperson of the Executive Board;
- The Director General, Madame Irina Bokova;
- Your Excellencies and Distinguished Delegates.

**Preamble**

Madame President,

My Delegation and I wish to congratulate you on your election as President of the 39<sup>th</sup> Session. You can count on our full support as you execute your onerous responsibilities. I also wish to express my delegation's appreciation for the sterling work done by your predecessor, H.E. Dr Stanley Simataa.

We also recognize and appreciate the great work done by the outgoing Director-General, Madame Irina Bokova, despite the harsh financial challenges that prevailed.

We convey our best wishes to you Madame Director General in your future endeavours.

We congratulate and welcome the appointment of Madame Audrey Azoulay as the next Director General of our organization and look forward to working with her.

Madame President, Zimbabwe, like other UNESCO Member States, is committed to the successful accomplishment of the Sustainable Development Goals **2030**. We see it as the only way to improve the lives of our people and contribute to global prosperity, stability and peace. We are doing this through concerted national efforts that include government working collaboratively with the private sector, civil society, knowledge institutions and youth organisations in the five sectors of the UNESCO mandate.

Zimbabwe has taken full cognisance of Agenda 2030 in crafting our 2018 Macro-Economic Framework that guides national development and budgeting processes which integrate social and economic development.

Madame President, Education remains Zimbabwe's highest priority. We have taken measures to transform the education system so that it can drive the achievement of Agenda 2030 and the development of a strong national economy. In January this year, we launched a new curriculum from early childhood to tertiary level. This curriculum, in addition to focussing on knowledge, also emphasises skills and values. The process of rolling out this curriculum and implementing it requires resources for teacher training, appropriate teaching and learning materials, and infrastructure development at all levels of education in rural and urban settings.

Our focus is on producing high-end skills that are grounded in science and technology for industrialisation and modernisation in order to meet the needs of the country. Our universities and tertiary institutions are seized with reforming their operations in order to produce skills that are relevant to a technologically driven economy.

Taking cognisance of the critical role played by heritage and culture in economic development, our institutions are now required to mainstream culture and heritage into their programmes.

Mr. President, we commend the work that has been done to date in building capacity especially with respect to Teacher Development over

the past two years. It is our desire to see UNESCO move towards assisting member states to develop and implement programmes that will ensure the attainment of SDG4.

Zimbabwe has a strong and diverse cultural base to provide for the development of competitive cultural industries. In order to promote the diversity of cultural resources, including our indigenous knowledge systems, we have ratified 5 out of the 6 cultural Conventions for the protection and promotion of cultural heritage. We are also participating in the development and implementation of a sustainable tourism strategy for our five World Heritage Sites with support from UNESCO and the African World Heritage Fund. We are grateful for the support we receive from the World Heritage Center in the management and protection of our World Heritage sites.

Madame President, as host of the sub-regional Office, my Government will spare no effort to support the UNESCO Regional Office for Southern Africa (ROSA) so that it can deliver on its mandate. We also appreciate the fact that despite the financial challenges facing UNESCO, the regional office has a robust portfolio of programmes which facilitate regional integration. Let me express our gratitude to those member countries which provide extra budgetary support to our regional office.

Madame President for us in Africa, the field offices play a critical role in supporting our efforts on the ground. I therefore would like to stress that the possible reforms and scaling down which may be on the way due to the organization's financial difficulties should take into account the important role that the field network plays in delivering of UNESCO programmes and supporting the member states.

Madame President Zimbabwe is landlocked in a drought prone region. Zimbabwe appreciates the work of the International Hydrology Programme (IHP) and the regional office in developing our capacity to mitigate water challenges to mitigate climate change.

In conclusion Madame President let me commend the Secretariat for putting together the new programme and budget 39C5 which we support fully particularly the maintenance of priority Africa.

I THANK YOU