

Address by Mr. Robert Alagjovovski, MA - Minister of Culture and  
President of the National Commission for UNESCO, Head of the  
Macedonian Delegation to the 39<sup>th</sup> Session of UNESCO General  
Conference (2 November 2017, Paris)

Distinguished President of the General Conference,  
Distinguished Director-General of UNESCO,  
Distinguished Chairperson of the Executive Board,  
Distinguished Heads of Delegations,  
Dear Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my great honour and pleasure, on behalf of the Government of the Republic of Macedonia and its delegation, to greet you and to express our wishes for successful and fruitful work on the 39<sup>th</sup> Session of the UNESCO General Conference.

The Government of the Republic of Macedonia as a UNESCO member state always pays great attention to the collaboration with the Organization and actively promotes and implements their activities and initiatives in the spheres of culture, education, science, communication, information, youth programs and civil society, human rights not only on national, but also on regional and international level.

Republic of Macedonia makes effort to implement active and constructive cooperation with other UNESCO member states, based on the democratic principles on which Organization endeavors. The human rights and freedom are imperative for creating and developing the current policies and practices in our country. By respect of the cultural diversity and raising awareness for importance of the intercultural dialog, we strive to overcome the stereotypes, to deepen the human and friendly relationships among people intended to build more humane world, open to new forms of constructive and creative dialog, as one of the Organization's core commitments.

In this direction, in the period between the two General Conferences of UNESCO, the Republic of Macedonia continued the friendly cooperation with the member countries of UNESCO through implementation of concrete activities that contributed to enrich professional experiences and capacities in the domains of all areas in our country. Additionally, we have made effort to participate jointly in overcoming and eliminating the current problems that humanity at global level faces, poverty, climate changes, intolerance, terrorism, migrations.

On this occasion, I would mention more significant activities that we have realized together with UNESCO as the proclamation of the Institute for Earthquake Engineering and Engineering Seismology in Skopje as the second category UNESCO Center, the opening of two UNESCO Chairs – the first one for Intercultural studies and research at the Faculty of Philosophy and UNESCO Chair in Media, Dialogue and Mutual Understanding at the High School of Journalism and Public Relation.

Since 2014, the Republic of Macedonia joined the long-term program "Man and the Biosphere" and in cooperation with the Republic of Albania, we successfully implemented the proclamation by UNESCO on Ohrid-Prespa as a trans boundary biosphere reserve. Our country is actively involved in the project "Towards Enhanced Management of the Common, Trans boundary Natural and Cultural Heritage of the Lake Ohrid Region" - UPSTREAM PROCESS, implemented by UNESCO and the EU, a cross-border cooperation between Albania and Macedonia for efficiency in the management of cultural and natural heritage in the Ohrid Lake region.

It is of utmost importance that we have inscribed three elements of the UNESCO Representative Lists for Intangible Cultural Heritage and this year we hope to inscribe the multinational applications "Cultural practices related to March 1 - Martins" Bulgaria, Romania, Moldova and Macedonia, as well as "Hidrelez" application submitted by Turkey and Macedonia. Our country, with the proclamation of the city of Bitola as a Creative City in the field of the film, joined the UNESCO network of Creative cities.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Republic of Macedonia for a long time successfully and effectively takes part in the large European Union and International Projects on citizen participation in education as one of the sustainable development goals. That is why in this globalization period on each level, the UNESCO Education 2030 places ahead of us new temptations and challenges for mass and quality education, thus providing equal education opportunities for all on global, regional and national level.

I would like to emphasize that in the Republic of Macedonia we continuously strive for the improvement of education quality, evaluation and introduction of appropriate educational policies and normative legislation and formulation of strategies and programs in the framework of the long-term program of UNESCO Education for All, through several projects implementation and lifelong learning. One of our commitments is the greater integration of education with culture, raising awareness of the significance of cultural heritage and cultural diversity as a matrix for nation identification. We invest in modern and applicative education that is going to respond to the development needs of the country and is going to be compatible and equitable with the education of the European Union countries.

Ladies and Gentlemen, on this occasion, I would like to emphasize that the membership in the UNESCO Executive Board for the period from 2011 to 2015 was a special honor for our country and that in the future we will continue to strive for further development of the organization, strengthening its international role.

I am deeply convinced that despite the complex challenges that mankind faces, we are going to be able to confirm in practice the efforts of UNESCO and its member states that the world can become more promising and more successful only through encouraging the intercultural dialogue, eradicating poverty, developing educational policies with aim to make them accessible to all, promoting and supporting the creative potential based on cultural diversity and freedom of expression, as well as, reinforcing the international cooperation among the countries and all active players in this progressive processes.

Finally, I will emphasize that the permanent determination of our country is peace preservation, democratic processes deepening and development in all domains of social life, human rights and freedom protection and promotion, standard of living improvement, comprehensive cooperation with our neighbors, with Europe and with all countries in the world, following the European Union's idea of a world with the least restrictions.

Thank you for your attention.