

REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA



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**NATIONAL STATEMENT BY HON. MINISTER OF HIGHER
EDUCATION, TRAINING AND INNOVATION, DR. ITAH.
KANDGII-MURANGI, AT THE 39th SESSION OF THE
UNESCO GENERAL CONFERENCE**

**04 November 2017
Paris**

Madam President of the 39th Session of the General Conference,

Esteem Ministers,

Mrs Irina Bokova, Director General of UNESCO,

Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen;

Madam President, I and the Namibian delegation congratulate you on your election as the President of the 39th Session of the General Conference. Namibia pledges unreserved support and commit to working with you during your term of office.

In the same vein, I wish to congratulate the outgoing President of the 38th Session of the General Conference, Honorable Stanley Mutumba Simataa for the stewardship during his tenure. Namibia's gratitude goes to UNESCO, its Member States and the Secretariat, for the support and cooperation that was extended to Hon Simataa as he served this global body.

Namibia further commends the Director - General, Mrs Bokova, for her excellent and strategic leadership in advocating for the role of UNESCO in the world. We also applaud her for adopting a visionary approach in mobilizing resources, coupled with a thorough result - based management system.

Madam President,

Excellencies,

The levels of contemporary intolerance point to the fact that humanity is at variance with itself. The high prevalence of conflicts; extremism; human and child trafficking, child marriages and gender-based violence, continue to highlight the social-ills that deprive the world of peace and stability. As the intellectual hub and moral custodian of the UN system, UNESCO has a sacred duty to embed in member states, a desire

for quality education; sustainable development; freedom of speech and lasting peace, as soft powers to address these social-ills. Therefore, UNESCO's mandate remains very relevant 72 years after its formation.

In the same vain, Namibia appreciates the role that UNESCO plays in the implementation of the SDGs. In our country the priority areas of TVET, quality education, teacher development, education for sustainable development and the global citizenship education, are important enablers for advancing the SDG 4.

TVET is seen as an effective vehicle for equipping the youth and young adults with requisite skills for employment, decent work and entrepreneurship. TVET is considered to be a catalyst for economic growth and a strategy for curbing youth unemployed.

Madam President

Excellencies

As part of President Hage Geingob's Harambee Prosperity Plan, which is the abridged version of Namibia's long term Vision 2030 and NDP5, TVET transformation and expansion is given the center stage and prominence as a strategy for accelerating skills' development and augmenting tertiary education graduates' employability opportunities. As we do this, we strive towards quality TVET instructors' education, quality TVET Institutions, quality production hubs and effective industry participation through job attachment and internship.

Namibia commends and appreciates UNESCO's efforts aimed at enhancing the role of the youth as important partners and actors in finding solutions to global problems, which also affect them. Youth unemployment remains a serious concern for many countries of the world, and has the potential to undermine global peace and stability.

In this regard, we are grateful for UNESCO's support in the area of TVET and is appreciative of the 2016 scoping mission, that has opened the door for the transformation and expansion of the TVET landscape in Namibia.

Madam President

Excellencies

Namibia is a child of international solidarity therefore we are proud active participants in UNESCO programs. In addition to TVET, we have benefitted from a good number of UNESCO programmes such as the Teacher Education Program; Ground water resource management project; Flood management initiative and Bioethics Initiative. We also, benefitted from the Participation Program and are also host to UNESCO Hydrology Chair at one of our public universities.

Like the rest of the world, Namibia is prone to climate change related disasters. For the past few years, we have been confronted with unprecedented floods and droughts, affecting many parts of our country. This have negatively impacted on the livelihoods of our citizens. In the quest to find solutions to this globally interconnected problem, we have come to appreciate that UNESCO provide the platform for exchanging ideas on best practices in combating climate change.

Madam President

Excellencies

Gender inequality is one aspect that we all need to address at national level because I believe that one of the key enabler in reducing poverty, is our focus on the empowerment of Women and Girls. Namibia is steadily making good strides in curbing gender inequality as reflected in its current parliamentary representation.

Furthermore, I sadly note that, 26 years since the UNESCO Windhoek Declaration, the number of journalists killed globally is ever increasing and this cannot continue. Any form of violence against humanity should not be tolerated. We should continue to find unique ways to ensure that the basic right of speech is respected at all times! More so, because, pluralistic and free press is essential for sustainable development and maintenance of democracy in a nation, notwithstanding economic development.

Madam President,

Dear Excellencies,

Let me conclude my intervention by saying that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is a paradigm shift that require radical approaches in our thinking and action. For the successful implementation of this agenda, the world need fresh innovative approaches. We cannot expect different results, while doing things the same way. We must construct innovative implementation pathways, whereby the focus should be on the importance of empowering and dignifying all human beings.

I thank you!