

Statement at the General Policy Debate of

UNESCO39th General Conference

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Madam President of the General Conference,

Chairperson of the Executive Board,

Madam Director-General,

Excellencies,

Ladies and gentlemen,

First of all, allow me to warmly congratulate the Moroccan Ambassador, H.E.Ms. Zohour Alaoui on her election to the presidency of the General Conference. I believe under your leadership the 39th General Conference will be a complete success!

In the past two years, UNESCO has exerted efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in times of financial hardship and has provided irreplaceable leadership and influence in the fields of education, sciences, culture and communication and information. We attribute this to the

concerted efforts of Member States and the hard work of the Secretariat, especially the outstanding contribution made by Madam Director General. Here I would like to express my highest esteem to Madam Director General.

Today, we are living in a time of deepening interconnectedness and interdependence of countries; a time when pluralistic society and cultural diversity converge; and a time when turmoil and conflicts are intertwined. Global education, sciences and culture are presented with new opportunities and challenges. UNESCO should further focus on its core mandates by building on the understanding and trust of Member States and proposing new perspectives, new strategies and new solutions in response to the endless new challenges.

Madam President, Ladies and Gentlemen,

We are about to enter the final four years of the Organization's medium-term strategy. I would like to take this opportunity to discuss with you UNESCO's development plans for the next few years:

To address the complex challenges in today's world, we need to have global citizens who are tolerant, innovative and responsible. Education is the best approach to realize this goal. In September last, during the Xiamen Summit of BRICS, China and UNESCO jointly organized the second edition of UNESCO

Prize for Girls' and Women's Education. China will continue to promote gender equality in education, support the work of the 2030 Education Steering Committee and ensure healthy development of the China-UNESCO Funds-in-Trust and other programmes. China is willing to share with other Member States our experiences of giving priority to education and making every effort to ensure that every child can receive equitable and quality education.

A new round of scientific and technological innovation and energy revolution is reshaping human society. UNESCO World Networks of Biosphere Reserves, UNESCO Global Geoparks and ocean tsunami warning systems around the globe essentially provide important support for building a modern society where humankind and nature coexist in harmony. China will continue to fulfill its obligation under Paris Climate Agreement, and unswervingly implement the vision of innovative, coordinated, green, open and shared development. We hope that UNESCO will further mobilize its multi-disciplinary and inter-disciplinary expertise to help Member States, especially small island states and developing countries, achieve coordinated economic, social and environmental development

Economic globalization and social informatization have made it a common practice for exchanges and mutual learning of civilizations. Earlier this year,

China hosted the “Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation”, which has effectively promoted the interconnection, communication and people-to-people exchanges. China hopes to achieve shared growth with other countries through discussion and collaboration in the Belt and Road Initiative, in order to transcend the division between civilizations through cultural exchanges, to overcome clashes of civilization with mutual learning and to surpass cultural superiority by promoting co-existence of civilizations.

Cyberspace has a profound impact on the way people live and produce. China strongly supports the protection of linguistic resources and documentary heritage in the age of digitalization. China is willing to actively participate in the construction of an international order and rules in cyberspace to stop the spread of violent extremism.

The document 39C/5 incorporates the efforts of the Secretariat and the consensus of Member States. China proposes to further optimize the Organization’s resources and focus on ensuring the smooth implementation of its programmes and priorities. China holds the view that every Member State should actively participate in the organization’s activities and National Commissions should further strengthen their role as coordinators in encouraging more social participation in UNESCO’s mandate.

Madam President, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Not long ago, the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China was successfully concluded. China has entered a new era of construction of modernized society. China will stick to the path of peaceful development, promote the building of a new type of international relations based on mutual respect, fairness and justice and win-win cooperation, and work together with all other countries to promote the building of a community of shared future for humankind. China reaffirms its commitment to supporting the lofty cause of UNESCO and hopes to work with the Organization and its Member States to uphold multilateralism, safeguard international justice and make unremitting efforts to build an open, inclusive, clean and beautiful world of universal security and lasting peace!

Thank you!