



National Statement of the Republic of South Sudan

Delivered by

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Sudan**

at

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Check against the delivery!

Your Excellencies,
Distinguished ladies and gentlemen,

Today, the world is confronted by many formidable challenges. Too many negative forces are waging wars and threatening our peace and security. My country, the Republic of South Sudan, has not been spared the tyranny of such forces. In this harsh climate, UNESCO is expected to construct “the defenses of peace” “in the minds of men”. The Member States are also expected to double their efforts.

Against this back drop, the Republic of South Sudan has made peace our top priority. Thanks to the solid commitment and wise leadership of our President, H.E. Salva Kiir Mayardit. Since the signing of the Revitalized Agreement in Addis Ababa in September 2018, the Government has achieved important milestones, including assembling, cantonment and screening of the opposition forces; amendment of the laws related to the Organized Forces; incorporation of the Agreement into the Constitution; and dissemination of the Agreement to the citizens.

The Government is also supporting the National Dialogue Initiative of our President. We have made significant progress; all the local and regional conferences have been convened and the National Conference, which is the last one, is scheduled to take place in Juba from the 2nd to 10th December 2019. The Conference is expected to address national issues of concern and broker a national consensus on the way forward and, in so doing, consolidate peace and national cohesion.

Mr President, Distinguished Delegates,
President Nelson Mandela once said “Education is the most powerful weapon you can use to change the world.” It’s our collective responsibility to ensure that education continues to change and transform our world. Therefore, UNESCO and the Member States must do more to end the global learning crisis and achieve SDG 4 and the rest of the 16 SDGs. We must leave no one behind; the hundreds of millions of out-of-school children and youth must go to schools.

The Republic of South Sudan is using the power of education to promote peace through education and prepare our children and youth for work and life in the 21st Century. I’m delighted to report that the government has implemented many educational reforms and made significant progress with the support of our development partners: we have developed a new National Curriculum to meet the needs and aspirations of our new nation; we have trained over 24,000 teachers to teach to the new National Curriculum; we have written over 120 textbooks and teacher guides to facilitate learning for our children and youth; we have printed and distributed almost 2 Million copies of these new learning materials to our schools; we have increased enrollment to over 3 Million learners; and we have narrowed the gender gap in formal education. We have also included peace education and human rights education in our National Curriculum and have established School Peace and Human Rights Clubs to promote the cultures of peace and respect for human rights in our schools and local communities. Moreover, we are building the capacity of our Universities to achieve quality and massification.

Mr President, Distinguished Delegates,
The Republic of South Sudan is proud of its rich cultural diversity; our 64 tribes speak 52 indigenous languages and that is an important part of our cultural heritage. For this reason, our Constitution provides for these national languages to be respected, developed and promoted. In 2020, our schools will change the medium of instruction in ECD and Primary 1-3 to our National Languages. The schools will also teach these 52 languages as subjects from ECD to Primary 8. The objective is to promote a cultural renaissance and develop good citizens who can embrace and celebrate our cultural diversity. The Government is also promoting our

cultural expressions by creating opportunities in official events and through co-curricular activities in our schools.

The Republic of South Sudan is also proud of its natural heritage. Our biodiversity is a national treasure. For example, our Wildlife migration provides an incredible experience to tourists and you can watch the videos on YouTube. Therefore, we are seeking the approval of UNESCO for the migration route to be recognized as a world heritage site.

Mr President, Distinguished Delegates,

In conclusion, Climate Change has become the biggest threat to our Planet and the human race. Natural disasters have become more frequent and more devastating. As we speak, one-third of my country, South Sudan, is flooded by excessive rains and our citizens are in desperate need of humanitarian assistance. So, I take this opportunity to appeal to the Member States of UNESCO to support the estimated 900,000 internally displaced persons in South Sudan.

We strongly believe that full implementation of The Paris Agreement, 2015 is the way forward. The Parties have a legal duty and a moral obligation to tackle Climate Change. On our part, the Republic of South Sudan will pursue Goal 4 of the National Curriculum, which is “To develop environmentally responsible members of our society” by teaching the environment as a new cross-cutting subject in our schools as well as facilitating the activities of the School Environment Clubs.

Mr President, Distinguished Delegates,

Finally, we are delighted Africa will remain a priority of UNESCO. The youth of Africa will constitute more than 50% of the global workforce in 2050. We call upon UNESCO to support the African Member States to empower the youth, to tackle youth unemployment and to manage migration. Together, we can transform our world and achieve prosperity for all. So, let's do our best and pray that God will do the rest!

Thank you, Mr President.