

Policy Statement of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar
by Ambassador & Permanent Delegate Mr. Kyaw ZEYA
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Paris, 2-3 December 2020

Thank you, Mr. Chair / President of the Executive Board.

President of the General Conference,

Madam Director-General,

Excellencies, Distinguished delegates,

I wish to thank the President of the Executive Board for his tireless efforts for the continuity of the work of the Board and making this meeting take place during this difficult moment.

I would also like to commend Madam Director-General and the Secretariat for the prompt and decisive response to the challenges posed by COVID-19 and keeping the Organization operational as usual.

The delegation of Myanmar thanks the Director-General for her comprehensive introduction, and appreciates the preliminary proposals concerning the draft medium-term strategy for 2022-2029 (41 C/4) and the draft programme and budget for 2022-2025 (41 C/5). The challenges described in the proposals reflect the key global trends and challenges of a new global environment. Myanmar wishes to urge UNESCO to keep forward in implementing the strategy to respond to a complex and rapidly changing global environment.

Education sector

As education is one of the areas most affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Ministry of Education of Myanmar has adhered to the policy of “no discrimination; no one left behind; no school drop-outs and no learning loss,” and prioritized children in ethnic and marginalized areas. The Ministry has encouraged digital transformation of the education system; developed Digital Education Platform (MDEP), and conducted online trainings on new KG+12 curriculums for all school teachers through free use of the MDEP.

While stressing the importance of ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education as well as promoting lifelong learning for all, the Ministry of Education supports life-long learning opportunities for all to meet the local labour market needs through face-to-face learning, online learning and blended learning.

Myanmar has established the Education Management Information System (EMIS) and used it at all schools and institutions throughout the country, and has been developing five modules for the Special Needs Education Programme of Emergency Preparedness Response (EPR) Policy Framework with the support of UNESCO & UNESCO-IIEP.

Myanmar thanks UNESCO for all best possible cooperation it has accorded to the country in implementing the three strategic objectives of UNESCO’s Medium-term strategy, while stressing that further cooperation is required.

Cultural sector

Myanmar has strengthened its capacity to safeguard the intangible cultural heritage with the support of UNESCO since 2013. The Department of Archaeology is actively engaged in the 3rd Periodic Reporting on the World Heritage Convention launched recently. The online support provided by the World Heritage Centre (WHC) to the National Focal Point and the Site Managers of the World Heritage sites is highly appreciated.

The Forest Department and Myanmar Geosciences Society (MGS) are working together on the designation of geo-features significant areas as UNESCO global geoparks. As an initial step, the Mt. Popa area (in the vicinity of Bagan) has been chosen as a priority site to be nominated as a geopark.

Information and Communication sector

The Ministry of Information of Myanmar and UNESCO hold every year the celebrations of World Press Freedom Day and Global Media and Information Literacy (MIL) Week which fall on 3rd May and 31st October respectively.

A project document on “Preventing hate speech and promoting peaceful society through Media Information Literacy” was signed between the Ministry of Information and UNESCO in August 2020. The Ministry wishes to continue working with UNESCO through its financial and technical assistance in the promotion of MIL among Myanmar people. Youth organizations and CSOs working on MIL will be invited to work together and better facilitate the implementation of MIL activities.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and UNESCO Myanmar Office organized a 3-day online Seminar on Countering Disinformation and Hate Speech in November for mid-

level officials from 14 Ministries, the Office of the Attorney-General and the Office of the Supreme Court.

Myanmar encourages UNESCO to keep going on combating intolerance, discrimination, the spread of misinformation and hate speech.

International Hydrological Programme (IHP)

Myanmar appreciates the initiatives of the Natural Science sector of UNESCO on the development of IHP during the pandemic. The Department of Meteorology and Hydrology (DMH), with the support of UNESCO, hosted the 27th International Hydrological Programme (IHP) Regional Steering Committee Meeting for Asia and the Pacific, from 28th October to 1st November 2020, in Naypyidaw to discuss scientific plans to minimize the impact of hydrological disasters and providing water-related capacity building.

The DMH is desirous of cooperating with UNESCO in strengthening the establishment of the local marine weather monitoring system for the coastal regions, the local Ocean monitoring and warning system related to sea level rise (SLR) and climate change issues and the research activities in those areas.

Conclusion

Myanmar firmly supports the continuity of the UNESCO strategic transformation and efforts initiated by Madam Director-General, and looks forward to continue working with her in the coming years.

The COVID-19 pandemic has guided us to practice new working modalities that suited to a new normal world. Myanmar firmly believes UNESCO will achieve its goals through our collective action in the spirit of multilateralism.

Lastly, Myanmar wishes to align itself with the ASPAC Group's statement.

I thank you.