

**Chairman of the Executive Board,  
President of the General Conference,  
Madam Director General,  
Distinguished Colleagues and Excellencies,**

First of all, I would like to thank Mr. Chairman and his team for mobilizing all possible means to convene this session despite the challenging time of pandemic.

As observers, we followed closely many key items that were discussed today and yesterday and in particular the introductory speech of Madam Azoulay. We support her strategic objectives, including widening the access to education across the world, science and technology as well as information, bolstering efforts to create fair and peaceful societies through preserving basic human rights. We also endorse the reform-based approach for strategic transformation, which the Director General has been promoting during the last years.

In the times when the pandemic has highlighted the urgency for efficiency of the Secretariat our Organization was led in an effective and professional way. We strongly believe that UNESCO is on the right path to counter growing challenges and support its leading role in further continuing current efforts. In this regard, the Government of Uzbekistan welcomes the announcement by the Director-General of her intention to continue her work for a second term. We support Madam Azoulay's candidature.

I would also like to reiterate the commitment of Uzbekistan to continuously support UNESCO's extensive mitigation efforts within its areas of expertise. On the national level, we continue to adapt, reform and strengthen our education, culture, science, communication, and information sectors.

In particular, in the CI sector Uzbekistan supports UNESCO's initiatives on protecting and promoting freedom of expression, access to information and independent media. Next year we will be hosting the first global conference to celebrate International Day for Universal Access to Information after the adoption of the UNGA resolution on this topic.

On education, Uzbekistan has made continuous adjustments to support distance teaching and learning, at all levels of education.

Together with the Education Sector led by ADG Giannini we have launched many important projects in Uzbekistan and are recipients of many funds for which we are grateful.

We recognize the importance of cultural expressions in fostering social cohesion and bringing resilience to societies on national and regional levels. Together with UNESCO we will be hosting an International Cultural Forum “Central Asia at the crossroads of civilizations” in ancient Khiva, which is a world heritage site. We are also benefiting from programs and projects that allow us to promote unique tangible and intangible cultural heritage of our country.

My country will continue to support UNESCO’s efforts in all areas of its competence in achieving the SDGs.

Thank you.