

Third plenary meeting of the 40th session of the General Conference

Wednesday 13 November 2019 at 10.10 a.m.

President: **Mr Altay Cengizer** (Turkey)

First report of the Bureau

1.1 The President:

Good morning ladies and gentlemen. I declare open the third plenary meeting of the General Conference, which will be devoted to the general policy debate. Before we start with the national statements, I wish to inform the delegates that the Bureau held its first meeting this morning, of which I am pleased to give you a short report. It is a short report for the time being as the Bureau will continue tomorrow at 9 a.m. There were lots of delegations who wanted to take the floor, so we will continue tomorrow. But this is the report, at least of what we have been doing this morning, what has transpired.

1.2 Upon presentation by the Chairperson of UNESCO's Executive Board, the Bureau recommended organization of the work of the 40th session of the General Conference as contained in document 40 C/2 Prov. Rev. for adoption of the plenary. In accordance with the directives concerning UNESCO's partnership with non-governmental organizations and with the provisions of the Rules of Procedure of the General Conference, the Bureau recommended that a number of non-governmental organizations, bearing consultative status with UNESCO, and having requested to take the floor during the general policy debate, be granted the right to do so.

1.3 Concerning item **2.1** "Report of the Director-General on the activities of the Organization in 2014-2017", the Bureau agreed to propose that this item be added to the agenda of the APX Commission for examination of the relevant draft resolution continued in document 40 C/3 Addendum. The Bureau also decided to recommend that items **10.2**, **5.15**, **5.19** and **5.25** be added to the agenda of the Legal Committee. The Bureau also suggested that the recommendations of the Executive Board, on items for adoption without debate, as contained in 207 EX/Decision 27.II, paragraph 4, be presented in each commission, for possible adoption. One question was put to the Secretariat concerning the need to reflect the most recent decisions of the Executive Board items on the agenda of this session of the General Conference. Members of the Bureau requested the plenary meeting at which items **7.3**, **7.4** and **7.5**, proposing amendments to the Constitution, would be discussed. This debate, as I have already told you, was not able to conclude at the end of the Bureau, and therefore we will reconvene for a second meeting tomorrow at 9 a.m. in Room X.

General policy debate

2.1 The President:

Ladies and gentlemen, let us start with the general policy debate. Yesterday morning, the Chairperson of the Executive Board reported on the work of the Board over the past two years. The Director-General assessed the achievements made by UNESCO, and eloquently outlined her vision for the Organization in the following years. It is time now for each of you, Member State representatives, to present your country's vision for UNESCO. The national statements will start today, and continue all day from today to Monday morning. The Director-General and her senior management team, seated here beside us, will follow closely all your remarks and deliberations. The Director-General will deliver her reply to the general policy debate on Monday morning.

2.2 Before we start with our first speaker, please allow me to remind you that each Head of Delegation will have six minutes to address the plenary. I understand that it is difficult to address complex issues in such a short intervention. I am also fully aware that many of you distinguished ministers and heads of delegation have travelled from afar to share your wisdom and concerns. However, it is in the interest of us all to keep within the six minute timeframe in order to have an efficient, productive and balanced debate. If you have already prepared a longer speech, you may request to publish the extended version of your text. To help you time your interventions, we have again put in place a visual and sound system. A brief musical signal will indicate that you have one minute left to finish your speech. Once you have reached the end of the allocated time, different pieces of world music will start playing. They will rise in crescendo if the speech continues. In addition, as President of the General Conference, I am empowered to interrupt any speaker exceeding the time limit – though I am sure this will not be necessary. I thank you in advance for your understanding and cooperation in this regard.

2.3 I now call on our first speaker for this morning. We are honoured by the presence of His Excellency, Mr Aleksandar Vučić, President of the Republic of Serbia, who will deliver his speech as the first speaker of this general policy debate. Excellency, you have the floor.

3.1 Serbia:

Mr President of the General Conference, Mr Chairperson of the Executive Board, Madam Director-General, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen. At the outset, allow me to congratulate you Mr Cengizer on your election to this high office of President of the 40th session of the General Conference, and wishing you every success in the discharge of these responsible duties. We also owe full gratitude and appreciation to Ms Azoulay as well for the responsible and professional manner in which she leads the Organization.

3.2 At a time when the world is getting faster and closer, there is probably not a job more responsible than that of UNESCO – establishing ties and developing education, science and culture. Globalization and the new technological revolution have to go hand-in-hand with the preparation of new generations for what the future brings, and therefore to ensure equal development opportunities for all. That is why the role of UNESCO, in the promotion of cooperation in the field of culture, science, education, information and communication, is today more important than ever. Peace, surely the most important goal for all of us, is not possible without learning about other cultures, without cooperation, without awareness of its necessity and benefits, without communication in the face of differences and a clear and fast flow of

information, all of which make UNESCO and its activities one of the main pillars supporting joint efforts towards lasting peace available to all.

3.3 It is UNESCO that has to find – and it does – the most important responses to complex challenges that humankind is faced with. Also, its expertise is of key importance in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, one of the major documents that the United Nations has adopted in its history. In view of all of this, it is highly important to successfully implement the process of full de-politicization and strategic transformation of UNESCO, thus fulfilling the prerequisites to revitalize its role and preserve its credibility.

3.4 Ladies and gentlemen, peaceful intercultural dialogue, understanding, tolerance and cultural exchange in a world of growing global interdependence are vital to preserving international peace and stability. Although it is not one of the goals of the 2030 Agenda, we find culture particularly important as it shapes our identity and intertwines all Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Cultural heritage contributes to the identity of our nations but at the same time it belongs to all mankind. Therefore special attention should be given to finding appropriate and efficient methods for its protection from all forms of violence and extremism, which is a global threat. Unfortunately, the severe example of Serbia's cultural, historical and spiritual heritage in Kosovo and Metohija is proof of the importance of the role of UNESCO and its support in the protection and preservation of heritage, particularly at the most critical moments. By ascribing to the list of World Heritage in Danger, four monuments of medieval cultural heritage in Kosovo and Metohija of universal value are preserved: the Dečani Monastery, the Patriarchate of Peć, the monastery of Gračanica and the Church of our Lady of Ljeviša. But hundreds of other sites and monuments are still endangered. Serbian heritage in Kosovo and Metohija is of immeasurable importance, not only for the national identity of Serbia, but also as a part of the treasured European and world heritage that needs additional protection.

3.5 I would like to underline the consistent adherence of the Republic of Serbia to the UNESCO Constitution and advocacy of an approach based on dialogue and consensus rather than on unilateralism in the interests of promoting peace and security. The core principles of UNESCO grounded also in the United Nations Charter and the UNESCO Constitution need to be fully respected with no exceptions, for only in this way can the system of international relations be improved as well as international law preserve its universal validity. For this very reason, I would like to stress once again that the Republic of Serbia will continue its commitment against politicization and new divisions and confrontation within UNESCO itself, as was the case four years ago in an attempt of international political affirmation of another State entity. Serbia stands ready to contribute constructively and in close cooperation with other UNESCO Member States to the promotion and achievement of the Organization's noble mission and its full potential towards lasting peace and universal human prosperity. What we like the most, let me add, is the idea of multilateralism, which is starting to dominate once again in the world, which will mean that not one or two or three big powers will dominate the world. We are witnessing the rise of small and middle-sized independent and sovereign States – that is good for the world, good for UNESCO and good for the United Nations.

3.6 Finally, I should to thank you very much, Madam Director-General, for your determined approach, for everything you have done so far, and for all your plans, particularly on very important issues such as education, ethics of artificial intelligence (AI) and many others, which will shape the world in a different way. Thank you for your great energy, for your terrific enthusiasm. You can count on Serbia. We will do our best to be very supportive and helpful. Thanks a lot once again.

4. **The President:**

Thank you your Excellency. Our next speaker is Mr Aziz Abdukhakimov, Deputy Prime Minister of Uzbekistan.

4.1 **Uzbekistan:**

Mr President of the General Conference, Mr Chairperson of the Executive Board, Madam Director-General, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen. First of all, I would like to congratulate Mr Ahmet Altay Cengizer on his assumption of the presidency of the General Conference and to wish him every success in this responsible post. It is a great pleasure to have this opportunity to speak from the tribune of UNESCO's General Conference, which is a unique platform, to critically evaluate the work done during the last two years and jointly develop UNESCO's medium- and short-term strategy in the fields of its competence.

4.2 We are very pleased to see a very positive trend in the expansion of cooperation between Uzbekistan and UNESCO. Here, I would like to emphasize the visits of the President of Uzbekistan to UNESCO Headquarters in October 2018, as well as of Ms Audrey Azoulay to Uzbekistan in August of this year. The bilateral talks at the highest level have laid the foundations of a new era in our cooperation. We introduced a systematic approach and started working closely in the framework of the country programme between the Government of Uzbekistan and UNESCO.

4.3 It is particularly important for Uzbekistan to expand cooperation with UNESCO in preserving the incomparable cultural and historical heritage of the Uzbek people. In this regard, we attach great significance to the outcomes of the 43rd session of the World Heritage Committee in Baku, during which we presented large-scale plans for the preservation of the tangible and intangible cultural heritage of Uzbekistan. We also call for closer cooperation with UNESCO in preparing new sites to include on the World Heritage List and the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. I would like to share my delight that during the 14th session of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage to be held in Bogota, Colombia, in December 2019, another piece of intangible culture – Lazgi, Khorez, dance, will hopefully be inscribed on the Representative List. In the upcoming years we are also planning to promote the inclusion of Bakhshi Art, the tradition of epic poetry and singing, on the List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, as well as some examples of ethnic sports that arose and developed over the centuries in the territory of Uzbekistan.

4.4 As the Director-General Ms Audrey Azoulay rightly mentioned during her recent visit to Samarkand, "Heritage is a bridge between our generations, between our societies. This is exactly what we should share with the whole world and transmit to other generations." In that sense we would like to underline UNESCO's role in organizing festivals and forums,

such as the Sharq Taronalari International Music Festival in Samarkand, the International Maqom Art Forum in Shakhrisabz, the International Bakhshi Art Festival in Termez and recently the international festival of folk art and handicraft in Kokand. In this context, I would like to underline the effective work done by the UNESCO Office in Tashkent during the past years. The Government of Uzbekistan will continue to support the UNESCO Office and ensure the conditions for its successful and fruitful functioning.

4.5 Dear Mr President, in conclusion I should like to stress that despite financial and other challenges, like many other international organizations, UNESCO has a crucial role to play in today's world, as building peace and stability is becoming very hard while conflicts on the basis of extremism and violence, inter-ethnic and interreligious hatred are growing. The efforts taken by UNESCO are more important than ever in promoting relations based on cultural diversity, dialogue and mutual understanding. In this regard, we should unite our strengths and pay greater attention to education to raise our youth in a spirit of peace and tolerance. Uzbekistan always stands ready to further widen cooperation with UNESCO in fulfilling its core mission, which is to leave a better world for the generations to come. Uzbekistan became the first donor to contribute to UNESCO and earmark voluntary funds to the Organization. We think it is important to help the work of the Secretariat by approving the budget they need to fulfil its important tasks. Thank you.

5. **The President:**

Thank you your Excellency. I now invite His Excellency, Mr Shawn Richards, Minister of Education, Sports, Youth and Culture and Deputy Prime Minister of Saint Kitts and Nevis.

6.1 **Saint Kitts and Nevis:**

Mr President of the General Conference, Madam Director-General, Mr Chairman of the Executive Board, fellow honourable members, including those from my own Caribbean region, distinguished ambassadors, ladies and gentlemen, I am deeply honoured to address this session of the General Conference on behalf of the Government of Saint Kitts and Nevis. My government continues to extol its unwavering support for UNESCO in contributing its valuable expertise to a small island developing State like Saint Kitts and Nevis. UNESCO remains an indisputable partner in our quest to achieve the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

6.2 Mr President, allow me to reiterate my Government's sentiments that the United Nations-recognized Small Island Developing States (SIDS) should be elevated to a position of global priority within the UNESCO work programme, and concomitant financial resources be allocated accordingly. This needs to be done with some expediency. We need little reminding of the multiple vulnerabilities facing SIDS, most forcefully brought home to us recently when Hurricane Dorian ripped through our neighbouring state, the Bahamas, leaving destruction in its wake.

6.3 While supporting UNESCO's SIDS Action Plan, a reconfigured and more targeted approach should be pursued going forward in identifying SIDS activity priorities. Given the lack of resources to fully optimize existing levels of activities in the current Action Plan – despite the laudable efforts of the Secretariat – I urge that attention be given to reducing the complexity of the scope of the Action Plan, to more adequately reflect the unique specificities of SIDS structural vulnerabilities. These vulnerabilities include susceptibility to regularly occurring and more intensified natural disasters resulting from environmental degradation and climate change, limited economies of scale, geographical remoteness as well as limitations on natural, human and technical resource bases and attendant high indebtedness.

6.4 One critical area in need of heightened UNESCO-SIDS policy development is climate change mitigation and adaptation solutions. But we suffer from inadequate data collection tools for assessment of impacts, identifying key vulnerabilities on the ground, and risk management reduction mechanisms, with timely assessments by UNESCO's Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission Tsunami Early Warning System. More emphasis should be given to funding data collection tools, and concomitant training sessions, to enable SIDS to make informed decisions about which climate change measures are appropriate. In short, we look to UNESCO as a major partner in our efforts to adapt and build resilience to the disastrous effects of climate change.

6.5 In the education policy area, my Government remains grateful for UNESCO's penetrating review of Saint Kitts and Nevis' education strategy and structures back in 2017. Central to our priorities arising from this review is the ongoing building of a framework for professionalizing teaching staff, with UNESCO input. We now seek the world-leading expertise of UNESCO in addressing other factors that undermine high-quality teaching and learning including: an outdated national curriculum and assessment framework; insufficient policies on quality and safety standards for education and training institutions.

6.6 Our second priority is young men's access to, and active participation in lifelong quality education. My Government is fully cognizant that social development cannot occur as long as young people are marginalized, ostracized or disregarded. Education plays a vital role in social and youth development. But it must proceed hand-in-hand with developing an education strategy fit for the twenty-first century that links higher and continuing education with labour market needs.

6.7 My Government welcomes the heightened importance provided by UNESCO in deploying its unique multi-disciplinary expertise – in science, culture, climate change, education, biodiversity resource preservation, knowledge management and information for decision-making – in addressing the multiplicity of challenges facing SIDS. One area stands out of particular timely importance – UNESCO's International Hydrological Programme (IHP) – which is actively providing Saint Kitts and Nevis with policy advice and tools to address our challenges in developing a sustainable water strategy. Small island vulnerability factors are directly affected by limited freshwater – both ground and surface water – resources, due to rising sea levels, climate variability and change. Given that SIDS are encircled by marine water, saltwater intrusion into groundwater resources has become a problem of some magnitude.

6.8 Distinguished President, members, colleagues, we face multi-dimensional challenges across the world, from global warming to massive displacement of communities fleeing wars, famine and social upheaval, from soaring inequality

to hugely damaging financial shocks. Amidst this we see the gradual disengagement of major powers from regional and multilateral institutions, accompanied by general demise of the multilateral consensus-building framework. These were the very foundations on which the United Nations was constructed in 1945.

6.9 Mr President, as we enter the third year of UNESCO's new leadership, my Government wishes to express its gratitude to Her Excellency Ms Audrey Azoulay for her support for small islands and our collective desire to see a more manageable and focused SIDS Action Plan fit for purpose. Thank you for your kind consideration.

7. The President:

Thank you, your Excellency. The next speaker is His Excellency, Mr Arayik Harutyunyan, Minister of Education, Science, Culture and Sports of Armenia.

8.1 Armenia:

Mr President of the General Conference, Mr Chairperson of the Executive Board, Madam Director-General, Excellencies, distinguished guests, it is a great honour for me to address for the first time the General Conference of UNESCO. Since the last General Conference, my country has undergone tremendous political changes. The Armenian Velvet Revolution, an exclusively peaceful democratic transition based on universal and national values, is the best example of unity, culture of peace, democracy and respect for fundamental human rights. At this critical juncture in my country's history, women and youth played an unprecedented active role and helped to bring about that peaceful political change. Further advancing the role of women and youth is of crucial importance for Armenia.

8.2 Ladies and gentlemen, preserving the values of multilateralism and international cooperation is fundamental to protecting cultural heritage, restoring humanity, sustaining peace and respecting cultural diversity. Due to the recent wars and armed conflicts, great numbers of people are deprived from opportunity to exercise their fundamental rights. Unfortunately, my region is not an exception. Our joint commitment to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is a pledge that no one will be left behind, and our future actions to reach this objective should be consistent with this obligation. Armenia firmly supports the inalienable rights of the people of Artsakh to freely pursue the political, economic, social, educational and cultural development and to determine their own destiny, to ensure a better future for generations to come.

8.3 Mr President, education is a driving force behind the development of each society. We believe that education is also a strong instrument of preventing of crime, of genocide and crimes against humanity. Education is one of the core elements of the Armenian initiated United Nations resolution on genocide prevention adopted by the United Nations General Assembly and the Human Rights Council. In 2015, the year of the commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide, the United Nations General Assembly, upon the initiative of Armenia, unanimously adopted the resolution establishing December 9 as the International Day of Commemoration and Dignity of the Victims of the Crime of Genocide and of the Prevention of this Crime.

8.4 Ladies and gentlemen, the Government of the Republic of Armenia attaches great importance to the development of innovative technologies and in education. Just recently, Armenia hosted the World Congress of Information Technologies. A number of organizations operating in Armenia have great achievements in the field of information technology and artificial intelligence. We welcome UNESCO's initiatives in the field of artificial intelligence and stand ready to contribute to its implementation by sharing our profound experience. Mr President, being situated at the crossroads of different civilizations, Armenia has cultivated deeply-rooted traditions of co-existence and respect towards other cultures and religions. This is why Armenia preserves a rich cultural heritage that includes, among others, the Hellenic era temple, some of the oldest churches of different Christian denominations in the world, medieval jewellers, Jewish cemetery, 18th century Iranian mosque and the world's largest Yazidi temple, which has been inaugurated recently. Being committed to safeguarding and protecting the cultural heritage, Armenia is continuously making its own contribution to the restoration of damaged cultural heritage in conflict areas. Armenia has immediately responded to the flagship initiative "Revive the Spirit of Mosul" launched by the Director-General by offering its assistance in the field of restoration and manuscripts. Unfortunately, due to ethnic or religious intolerance, numerous cultural heritage sites have been destroyed even in peace-time, including those belonging to my people. The well-documented complete annihilation of thousands of Armenian medieval Djulfra cross-stones in Azerbaijan is a stark case in point.

8.5 Ladies and gentlemen, in times of unprecedented extremism and intolerance we should more than ever realize the essential role UNESCO must play in promoting tolerance, mutual respect and dialogue of cultures. The Republic of Armenia strongly believes in the unique mission of UNESCO and stands ready to be further engaged. I thank you for your attention.

9. The President:

Thank you your Excellency. The next speaker on my list is His Excellency Professor Laurent Serge Etoundi Ngoa, Minister of Basic Education of Cameroon.

10.1 Cameroun :

Monsieur le Président de la Conférence générale, Monsieur le Président du Conseil exécutif, Madame la Directrice générale, Mesdames et Messieurs les Chefs de délégations, Excellences, Mesdames et Messieurs les Ambassadeurs, délégués permanents, Mesdames et Messieurs. C'est pour moi un grand honneur et un réel plaisir de prendre la parole au nom de la République du Cameroun. En cette circonstance solennelle, je voudrais de prime abord remercier et féliciter chaleureusement Monsieur le Président de la Conférence générale pour sa brillante élection à ce poste.

10.2 Dans le même chapitre, je voudrais rendre un hommage appuyé à Madame Zohour Alaoui, Ambassadrice, Déléguée du Maroc auprès de l'UNESCO, pour la compétence avec laquelle elle s'est acquittée de son mandat. Sa présence constante à toutes les rencontres organisées au siège de l'Organisation a été la preuve de son engagement profond pour la cause de l'UNESCO.

10.3 Monsieur le Président, la 40^e session de la Conférence de l'UNESCO revêt un caractère symbolique. Elle se situe au terme du premier biennium, du sceau de la Transformation stratégique mise en œuvre par Madame la Directrice générale, Mme Audrey Azoulay. Je voudrais, pour sa détermination et son engagement, pour toutes ses qualités, lui présenter les félicitations du Cameroun. Monsieur le Président, permettez-moi enfin d'adresser mes chaleureuses félicitations à Monsieur Lee Byong-hyun, Président du Conseil exécutif, pour le doigté et le dynamisme avec lesquels il a mené la préparation de nos assises.

10.4 Mesdames et Messieurs, le Cameroun entretient avec l'UNESCO des relations anciennes, et, globalement, cette coopération fructueuse a permis de donner la visibilité à l'Organisation par la mise en place d'importants projets. Je vais citer quelques-uns. L'ouverture à Yaoundé du Bureau régional multisectoriel de l'UNESCO pour l'Afrique centrale qui couvre onze pays ; la création de radios communautaires ; la création du Centre d'excellence de micro-sciences, de Catégorie 2 à Yaoundé ; l'organisation, récemment, du 24 au 26 octobre, du premier Forum MOST pour l'Afrique centrale et le Nigéria, dont les résultats obtenus ont été édifiants ; l'accompagnement de l'UNESCO dans la mise en œuvre du projet « Bimbia, la route des esclaves », qui porte sur la restauration du site de Bimbia, port d'embarquement des esclaves sur la côte atlantique ; l'inscription de nos importantes réserves sur la Liste du patrimoine matériel de l'UNESCO ; et enfin, les visites officielles réalisées au siège de l'UNESCO par nos responsables au plus haut niveau.

10.5 Monsieur le Président, le contexte politique mondial actuel reste fortement perturbé par la montée de l'islamisme radical, la montée des irrédentismes nationaux et la recrudescence des actes terroristes, qui ont de graves conséquences sur la vie des peuples. Mon pays en est une victime. Les déplacements massifs de populations à l'intérieur comme à l'extérieur, des violences qui s'exercent sur les populations les plus vulnérables, atteignant parfois leur intégrité physique. Par ailleurs, situé dans le Golfe de Guinée, dans le Bassin du Congo, le Cameroun fait partie des plus grandes réserves forestières de par le monde. Nous sommes donc concernés par l'aggravation du réchauffement climatique qui est lié globalement à la destruction massive des écosystèmes forestiers, menaçant par là même les réserves mondiales de la biosphère. Il y a fort à craindre que les exploitations effrénées de ces réserves-là puissent constituer de manière récurrente des menaces de toutes sortes qui pressent sur la survie même de l'humanité.

10.6 Le Cameroun n'échappe pas à ces agressions. Notre pays participe ainsi à la mise en œuvre des résolutions et des recommandations issues des différents fora sur le climat à travers la protection de ses écosystèmes forestiers, grâce notamment à la création des réserves naturelles telles que la Tri-sangha et à la Réserve du Dja. Monsieur le Président, le Cameroun restera aux côtés de l'UNESCO et continuera à lui apporter son concours, en vue de la promotion et de la diffusion des vertus cardinales auxquelles l'humanité est si fièrement attachée, parce qu'elles justifient notre existence. Nous marcherons ensemble. Je vous remercie pour votre bienveillante attention.

11. **The President:**

Thank you, your Excellency. The next speaker is Her Excellency Dr Itah Kandjii-Murangi, Minister of Higher Education, Training and Innovation of Namibia.

12.1 **Namibia:**

Mr President of the 40th session of the General Conference, Madam Director-General of UNESCO, esteemed colleagues, ministers and heads of delegations, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen, Namibia congratulates you, Ambassador Cengizer, on your election as the President of this session of the General Conference. Namibia pledges its full support and commits to working with you during your tenure. The delegation further commends the Director-General for her superb leadership of UNESCO, demonstrated by her invaluable contributions to Agenda 2030 and the ongoing UNESCO Strategic Transformation agenda. We strongly believe in a UNESCO that is well aligned to its identified strategic fields of competence; to supporting and strengthening international solidarity; and advancing the course of global thematic areas that solidify UNESCO's mandate and Agenda 2030.

12.2 Mr President, humanity faces many social challenges. Akin to other countries, Namibia faces the scourge of climate change. As a nation we experienced the most devastating drought in more than 30 years which has negatively affected human and animal welfare. This drought has heightened the problem of water scarcity in the country and the need for advocacy and education on environmental sustainability. In spite of the current situation, through you, Director-General, Namibia thanks UNESCO for its contribution of \$40 000 to our national drought emergency fund. We also wish to thank many of the Member States who provided moral and material support to us during these difficult and trying times.

12.3 The existing UNESCO Chair on Hydrology and the Water Sector at the Namibia University of Science and Technology (NUST) which is aimed at advancing research to mitigate the impact of climate change, is a step in the right direction for many arid areas of the world. The UNESCO Chair is also linked to the work of global priority Africa, with the objective of strengthening Africa's science structures and augmenting pertinent training in research and capacity building. Furthermore, the evidence-based work of the International Hydrological Programme (IHP) is a welcome drive within the fold of UNESCO. This is the only intergovernmental platform dealing with water science and capacity building in the United Nations system and Namibia supports the proposal to establish an intergovernmental observatory of water for peace. In the same vein, Namibia welcomes the revision of the IHP statutes to be adopted by this session of the General Conference aimed at further strengthening the impact of the programme. UNESCO's advocacy work in the advancement of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) as part of Agenda 2030 is also highly commendable.

12.4 Mr President, all forms of violence, gender disparities, youth unemployment and poverty remain serious challenges that disrupt social cohesion and the equilibrium of peace and stability in our nations. In this regard, Namibia commends the outcome of initiatives such as the Biennale of Luanda in Angola recently held in September 2019 aimed at building strong institutions, systems and processes to advance the culture of peace in Africa.

12.5 In Namibia a strong education system that is accessible, equitable and one that provides equal opportunity for girls and boys remains a priority. Education is paramount to addressing youth unemployment and in Namibia the prominence given to technical vocational education and training (TVET) under the Harambee Prosperity Plan (HPP) speaks

volumes of our targeted national skills development initiatives. Namibia will play host to the 2020 African TVET Competition and I wish to, therefore invite all African countries to Windhoek, Namibia, in order to showcase what our continent has to offer in that space.

12.6 Mr President, Namibia also embraces the advances in artificial intelligence with the realization that it is a tool that should advance our country's development agenda and industrialization, and optimize the benefits that may accrue to key sectors such as agriculture, health, housing and education. Another important milestone in the annals of UNESCO's history in 2021 is the 30th anniversary of the Windhoek Declaration for the Development of a Free, Independent and Pluralistic Press. This is an anniversary that will demand concerted efforts of all Member States and the Secretariat to consider how best to make it a memorable celebration as we continue to deepen the core values of a free press. As the nation with the freest press in Africa, Namibia believes that this is a cause every nation has to prioritize and transcend. With that, I thank you for your attention.

13. **The President:**

Thank you Madam. I now invite His Excellency Mr Moustapha Mohamed Mahamoud, Minister of National Education and Vocational Training of Djibouti.

14.1 **Djibouti :**

Monsieur le Président de la Conférence générale, Monsieur le Président du Conseil exécutif, Madame la Directrice générale, Excellences, mesdames et messieurs, *Bismillāh ir-rahmān ir-rahīm*. Monsieur le Président, permettez-moi, en premier lieu, de vous adresser les chaleureuses félicitations de la Délégation djiboutienne pour votre brillante élection à la Présidence de la 40^e session de la Conférence générale de l'UNESCO et de féliciter les organisateurs de ce grand évènement de la famille UNESCO qu'est bien sûr la Conférence générale, avec à sa tête Madame la Directrice générale, Audrey Azoulay.

14.2 Mesdames et Messieurs, cette rencontre constitue, à chaque fois, pour les participants, l'occasion de réaffirmer notre engagement constant et déterminé pour un monde plus apaisé où les Hommes, bien sûr un grand H, vivent en harmonie. C'est aussi une occasion d'échanger, de revitaliser notre volonté d'impacter positivement les individus en faveur bien sûr d'un monde plus prospère, plus juste et plus durable, et ce bien sûr en passant par une éducation qui prône une culture humaniste et scientifique, et qui répond bien sûr aux impératifs du moment et ceux de l'avenir. Je tiens à saluer ici le processus ambitieux de Transformation stratégique engagé par la Directrice générale lors de sa prise de fonction en 2017. Lequel processus a été, comme vous le savez, approuvé à l'unanimité par les pays membres, et soutenu pleinement par la République de Djibouti.

14.3 Nous avons foi en la réforme engagée dont l'objectif, bien sûr, est d'en faire, de faire face, pardon, aux différents défis que traverse l'UNESCO, et nous croyons fermement qu'elle contribuera indéniablement au renforcement des programmes mis en place en faveur du continent, notamment la question transversale « Priorité Afrique ». Notre organisation, l'UNESCO, notre maison commune, est en convalescence, mais nous sommes confiants, bien sûr, que sous la houlette, *insh'allah*, de la Directrice générale, nous arriverons à surmonter, ensemble, les obstacles entravant notre chemin, et à remédier à toute difficulté rencontrée. Cependant, il nous faut être très vigilants et ne pas ébranler les fondations de notre Organisation en introduisant des changements structurels qui risqueraient d'être bien sûr contreproductifs. À notre humble avis, le temps est à la préservation des petits gains et à la consolidation des acquis, afin que notre Organisation retrouve son équilibre. C'est en ce sens que nous voudrions toujours, que nous devrions toujours trouver un consensus sur toutes les décisions majeures à prendre.

14.4 Il importe de souligner, également, que notre Organisation a besoin de l'appui financier et budgétaire de ses États membres afin bien sûr de mener à bien sa mission. Et cela est d'autant plus nécessaire que la volonté des instances internationales est de placer l'éducation au cœur de l'agenda mondial dans le cadre du Programme de développement durable de l'horizon 2030. On ne dira jamais assez combien l'éducation et la formation sont déterminantes pour transformer la vie des femmes et des hommes, et cela est d'autant plus vrai dans ce monde en proie bien sûr à des changements si rapides que seule une éducation solide et ancrée dans son contexte, est susceptible bien sûr d'apporter les réponses adéquates à ces défis, dont les contours restent parfois insaisissables.

14.5 Pour la terre d'échanges et de rencontres qu'est mon pays, la République de Djibouti, notre survie est contributive bien sûr des valeurs de tolérance, de dialogue, de respect de l'autre et de la cohésion dans la diversité. Ainsi nous nous sommes donnés les moyens de traduire en actes les principes fondamentaux de l'UNESCO qui épousent parfaitement notre vision de l'offre éducative, et convaincus que nous sommes du pouvoir de transformation de l'éducation. Le Ministère de l'éducation nationale et de la formation professionnelle veille à l'atteinte de l'ODD 4, objectif qui s'aligne sur la Vision Djibouti 2035, notamment en ce qui concerne bien sûr la « Formation du capital humain ».

14.6 Je ne pourrai ici dresser une liste exhaustive de toutes les actions menées sur le terrain, je n'en citerai bien sûr que quelques-unes : Notamment, l'accès universel à l'éducation et l'Égalité des chances supporté par le premier axe stratégique de notre schéma directeur décennal. Présentement, nous targuons un taux de scolarisation très honorable de 81,4%, fruit d'une vision, d'une véritable vision humaniste de l'éducation du Président de la République, mais aussi la scolarisation universelle, la prise en charge scolaire des enfants de réfugiés, depuis la déclaration de 2017. Un accent particulier est mis également sur les TICE, un nouveau concept d'école rurale et défini, mais aussi la généralisation progressive du préscolaire, la promotion de la culture, des programmes éducatifs contextualisés et ouverts bien sûr sur le monde, qui sont en ce moment même révisés pour inclure les compétences de vie et celles XXI^e siècle. Le développement professionnel et la formation des enseignants, l'enseignement technique et la formation professionnelle constituent également bien sûr des chevaux de bataille pour mon département.

14.7 Au niveau de la Commission nationale de l'UNESCO, après une feuille de route qui a permis bien sûr une compréhension commune de l'ODD 4, le travail sur l'élaboration d'une politique nationale de l'éducation au développement durable et l'élaboration de la politique culturelle de mon pays restent les deux activités phares de la Commission. Enfin,

cette année est pour mon département une année charnière, puisque nous mettons en œuvre le projet transformateur, accompagnés par le Partenaire mondial de l'éducation et la Banque mondiale. Lequel projet s'inscrit dans un cadre bien sûr et un esprit participatif et consultatif. Merci. Vous m'avez écouté patiemment, et je vous remercie.

15. The President:

Thank you very much your Excellency. The next speaker on my list is His Excellency Dr Mohammed Adbul Wahed Al-Hammadi, Minister of Education and Higher Education of Qatar.

١٦-١ السيد الحمادي (قطر):

سعادة رئيس المؤتمر العام، سعادة رئيس المجلس التنفيذي، سعادة المديرية العامة لليونسكو، أصحاب السعادة، السيدات والسادة، اسمحوا لي في بداية كلمتي أن أتقدم بالأصالة عن نفسي ونيابة عن وفد دولة قطر بالتهنئة لسعادة السيد ألتاي سنجيزر، رئيس المؤتمر العام بمناسبة انتخابه رئيساً لهذه الدورة، متمنياً له كل التوفيق والنجاح في إدارة أعمال هذا المؤتمر. كما أعرب عن خالص شكري وتقديري للسيدة زهور العلوي، رئيسة المؤتمر العام السابق، ولرئيس المجلس التنفيذي وأعضائه على جهودهما في الدورة السابقة.

١٦-٢ حضرات السيدات والسادة، تحرص دولة قطر دائماً في سياستها الخارجية على الالتزام بمبادئ ومقاصد ميثاق الأمم المتحدة وعلى مبدأ التعاون والتنسيق والشراكة مع العديد من مناطق العالم دون تمييز، وتقدم المساعدات الإنسانية والإنمائية لصالح العالم بأسره، الأمر الذي من شأنه الإسهام في تحقيق أهداف خطة التنمية المستدامة لعام ٢٠٣٠، وذلك على الرغم من الحصار الجائر الذي تتعرض له بلاده منذ حزيران/يونيو ٢٠١٧، والذي لم يثنها حتى الآن عن الوفاء بالتزاماتها الدولية. ولا يفوتني أن أشير في عجالة إلى بعض تلك المساهمات التي أعلنت عنها دولة قطر، فعلى هامش اجتماعات الدورة الرابعة والسبعين للجمعية العامة للأمم المتحدة، أعلن حضرة صاحب السمو الشيخ تميم بن حمد آل ثاني، أمير دولة قطر، خلال مشاركة سموه في قمة العمل المناخي التي انعقدت في ٢٣ أيلول/سبتمبر ٢٠١٩ عن مساهمة دولة قطر بمبلغ ١٠٠ مليون دولار أمريكي وذلك لدعم الدول الجزرية الصغيرة النامية وأقل البلدان نمواً للتعامل مع تغير المناخ والتحديات البيئية. ووقعت مؤسسة التعليم فوق الجميع عقد الشراكة الجديد مع البنك الدولي والذي يلزم الطرفين بتوفير ٢٥٠ مليون دولار لدعم مليوني طفل وتمكينهم من الوصول للتعليم النوعي في ٤٠ بلداً. وكذلك ما أعلنت عنه دولة قطر في منتدى الدوحة ٢٠١٨ من تقديم دعم متعدد السنوات لتمويل عدد من هيئات منظومة الأمم المتحدة بمبلغ ٥٠٠ مليون دولار. وبلغ إجمالي المساعدات المالية التي قدمها صندوق قطر للتنمية، لدعم قطاع التعليم في مناطق عدة من دول العالم خلال الفترة من ٢٠١٣ إلى ٢٠١٩، مبلغاً قدره ٧٠٩ ملايين دولار.

١٦-٣ حضرات السيدات والسادة، إن دولة قطر تؤمن إيماناً راسخاً بأن التعليم حق إنساني ومطلب أساسي لتحقيق الديمقراطية والتنمية المستدامة، لذا فقد بادرنّا باتخاذ كافة الإجراءات والتدابير لتنفيذ الخطة الاستراتيجية الثانية لقطاع التعليم والتدريب بالدولة للفترة من ٢٠١٨ إلى ٢٠٢٢ المنشقة من رؤية قطر ٢٠٣٠، والتي تتوافق مع الأهداف التنموية وغايات هدف التنمية المستدامة ٤ والمؤشرات العالمية للتعليم. ويسعدني هنا أن أشير إلى جانب من التقدم الذي أحرزته دولة قطر تجاه بلوغ غايات هدف التنمية المستدامة ٤ التي تشمل ارتفاع معدلات الالتحاق بالتعليم الابتدائي والمساواة الكاملة بين الجنسين في التعليم العام، وكذلك إنشاء مدارس تخصصية للطلبة ذوي اضطراب التوحد والإعاقة الذهنية.

١٦-٤ وفي إطار تعليم العلوم والتكنولوجيا والهندسة والرياضيات، تم افتتاح مدارس متخصصة في تلك المجالات، بالإضافة إلى إدراج مهارات التعلّم مدى الحياة والمهارات الحياتية في المناهج الدراسية. وضمن جهود تطوير المنهج التعليمي في دولة قطر، فقد راعينا في إعدادها أن يكون وفق مبادرات اليونسكو لدعم السلام من خلال التعليم، وأن يعزز القيم والكفاءات العامة الهادفة إلى تخريج الطالب الذي يحترم الاختلاف ويتقبل الآخر ويفهم ركائز المواطنة العالمية وينبذ التعصب والعنف والإرهاب والغلو الفكري ويحترم التعددية والتنوع الثقافي ويتبنى ثقافة الحوار والتسامح ويحترم حقوق الإنسان. وعلى مستوى التعليم العالي، تم افتتاح فروع لجامعات عالمية في الدوحة بالإضافة إلى الكليات والجامعات الوطنية لتلبية احتياجات سوق العمل القطري، ولدعم وتعزيز البحث العلمي والابتكار.

١٦-٥ وفي مجال الثقافة والتراث، حرصت دولة قطر منذ وقت مبكر على الاهتمام بالتنوع الثقافي وحوار الثقافات والحضارات والأديان. وانطلاقاً من كونها عضواً في اللجنة الحكومية الدولية المعنية بحماية وتعزيز تنوع أشكال التعبير الثقافي في منظمة اليونسكو، فقد قدمت قطر دعماً مالياً لبرنامج اليونسكو لصندوق التراث في حالات الطوارئ مقداره أربعة ملايين دولار، واستضافت العديد من المؤتمرات والمنتديات الدولية حول الحوار بين الثقافات والحضارات. وتجسيدا لتوصيات اليونسكو بشأن حماية وتعزيز المتاحف ومجموعات التحف وتنوعها والدور الذي تؤديه في المجتمع، فإن المتحف الوطني الجديد يقدم تجربة تفاعلية ترصد تطور الحياة في دولة قطر والعالم، وتؤكد مدى اهتمام الدولة بالإرث الثقافي من خلال تحفة معمارية على شكل وردة الصحراء الصخرية.

١٦-٦ وفي مجال الشباب والرياضة وإعداد جيل المستقبل، تم إطلاق برنامج الجيل المبره الذي تم تصميمه كخدمة لاستضافة الدولة لبطولة كأس العالم لكرة القدم لعام ٢٠٢٢، وذلك لتمكين وتعليم الطلبة أسس وقوانين لعبة كرة القدم وتعزيز المهارات الحياتية لديهم من خلال اللعبة. وكذلك، استضافت قطر الشهر الماضي بطولة العالم لألعاب القوى وبطولة العالم للألعاب الشاطئية، الذي أثبت للعالم أن قطر لديها الجاهزية التامة لاستضافة أكبر بطولات العالم الدولية. وفي الختام، أتمنى لمؤتمرنا هذا التوفيق والسداد في تحقيق أهداف اليونسكو السامية، وشكراً على حسن إصناتكم.

17. The President:

Thank you very much your Excellency. The next speaker is His Excellency, Mr Hatem Ben Salem, Minister of Education of Tunisia.

١٨-١ السيد بن سالم (تونس):

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم، السيد رئيس المؤتمر، أصحاب المعالي والسعادة السيدات والسادة، ينعقد مؤتمرا هذا والعالم يشهد أزمات حادة تفجرت من خلل الأوضاع الاقتصادية والمالية والاجتماعية والبيئية، فاهتزت الدول بتأثيراتها، واضطربت العلاقات الدولية بتداعياتها. وليس لنا أمام هذا الوضع المتأزم من خيار سوى رفع التحديات، لا سيما من خلال تعزيز عمل اليونسكو ودعمها لتقوم بأداء رسالتها والاضطلاع بالمهام والوظائف الموكلة لها على الوجه الذي يحقق

الأهداف المرسومة في ميثاقها. والمتعمن في مشروع برنامج وميزانية المنظمة لعامي ٢٠٢٠-٢٠٢١ يتبين له أن مجالات عمل اليونسكو، النابعة من أصالة روح القيم التي أسست لدستورها، تمثل خطوة جديدة وفرصة هامة أمام المجتمع الدولي لتدارك الأوضاع من أجل تحقيق التعليم الجيد للجميع وبناء مجتمع المعرفة، وجعل البعد الثقافي مكوناً أساسياً للتنمية الشاملة والمستدامة، وربط تطوير العلوم والتكنولوجيات بمتطلبات التنمية. ولهذا السبب بالذات نعبر اليوم عن دعمنا للسيدة أودري أزولاي المديرية العامة في مساعيها الإصلاحية الرائدة.

٢-١٨ السيد الرئيس، سيداتي سادتي، إن ضمان التعليم الجيد والمنصف والشامل للجميع، وتعزيز فرص التعلم مدى الحياة الذي أجمع عليه المجتمع الدولي نعتبره من هنا فصاعداً أساس كل فعل إنساني مستقبلي، فالتربية منذ الطفولة المبكرة إلى أواخر العمر تشكل الدافعة المحورية للتنمية المستدامة بأبعادها الاقتصادية والاجتماعية. وقد حرصت تونس على الانخراط الفعلي في هذا التوجه العالمي حيث عملت على الموازنة بين غايات هدف التنمية المستدامة ٤ والأهداف الاستراتيجية لمخططها الوطني للتربية ٢٠١٦-٢٠٢٠ من خلال التشريعات الوطنية التي تدعم الحق في التعليم الجيد والمجاني للجميع، وبادرت ببعث المنتدى الوطني لمتابعة تنفيذ هدف التنمية المستدامة ٤، وهو عبارة على هيئة تفكير استراتيجي ومختبر لمتابعة الجانب التنفيذي.

٣-١٨ سيداتي سادتي، يُعتبر الاستثمار في العلوم والتكنولوجيا مقوماً هاماً في دفع التنمية الاقتصادية والتقدم الاجتماعي. ونحن ندعم برامج اليونسكو الرامية إلى النهوض بالبحث العلمي وتقليص الفجوة العلمية والرقمية بين الدول وترويج أفضل الممارسات لمساعدة الدول الأعضاء على إحكام الربط بين تملك المعارف العلمية وتناميها وربطها بمتطلبات التنمية المستدامة وتعبئة العلوم والتكنولوجيات لدعم الأهداف الإنمائية الوطنية. ولا شك أن استراتيجية عمل اليونسكو في مجال الاتصال والمعلومات الرامية إلى سد الفجوة الرقمية تشكل مقوماً أساسياً في التقدم وتطوير الأوضاع في الدول الأعضاء. وإن بلادنا، الجمهورية التونسية، التي تطمح إلى مواصلة الانخراط في هذا التوجه، تشيد بأهمية دور كل من البرنامج الدولي لتنمية الاتصال وبرنامج المعلومات للجميع في تنسيق الجهود بين الدول الأعضاء وتعزيز الاستفادة من وسائل الاتصال وإتاحة المعلومات للجميع.

٤-١٨ إن الأوضاع الصعبة التي تسود العالم في الظرف الراهن أدت إلى تعطش الشعوب إلى العيش في بيئات آمنة ومزدهرة، ونحن مدعوون اليوم أكثر من أي زمن مضى إلى التضامن ضد الفكر التطرفي، سواء كان ذلك في المجال الديني أو الأيديولوجي، المتسبب في هذه المآسي البشرية الصارخة. ولا شك أن منظمة اليونسكو تمثل أفضل بيت نتقاسم فيه الخبرة ونضع البرامج المشتركة التي تسهم في الحفاظ على الأمن والسلم الدوليين. وفي هذا المقام لا بد من التعبير عن مساندة تونس الكاملة لقضية الشعب الفلسطيني وطموحه لبناء دولة ذات سيادة تمكن أبناءها من حقوقهم المشروعة وفي مقدمتها الحق في التعليم الذي يشهد اليوم انتهاكات ليس لها مثيل في تاريخ البشرية المعاصر يجب الوقوف ضدها بكل قوة وحزم.

٥-١٨ وفي الختام أجدد الشكر والتقدير لمعالي المديرية العامة على الجهود المبذولة، معبراً عن استعدادنا الدائم لخدمة التعاون الفكري الدولي في إطار ما تنجزه اليونسكو من مبادرات لبناء مجتمع إنساني قادر على تحقيق السلم المبني على أساس التضامن الفكري والمعنوي بين بني البشر كما جاء في ميثاقها. وشكراً على حسن الإصغاء، والسلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته.

19. **The President:**

Thank you your Excellency. The next speaker is His Excellency Professor Georges Macguire, Cabinet Secretary of Education of Kenya.

20.1 **Kenya:**

Mr President of the General Conference, Madam Director-General, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, Kenya's collaboration and partnership with UNESCO spans over 55 years, resulting in deep commitment to the ideals of UNESCO. The preamble of the Constitution of UNESCO declares that "Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed". Kenya is totally committed to the promotion of a culture of peace and sustainable development.

20.2 Ladies and gentlemen, it is against this background that Kenya has presented its candidature for the non-permanent seats at the United Nations Security Council for the period 2021-2022. The bid for these seats received overwhelming support from the African Union, which endorsed Kenya as the African candidate.

20.3 Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, we welcome the initiatives undertaken under global priority Africa and gender equality and the increased budgetary proposal made by the Director-General in support of priority Africa. Kenya appreciates the efforts of UNESCO towards the harmonization of SDG 4 and the continental education strategy for Africa frameworks as key outcomes of the high level planning conference for education in 2018. Kenya is totally committed to working closely with UNESCO to take forward the comments made in the Nairobi Declaration and Call for Action on Education 2018. Kenya is honoured to be part of the Global Action Plan (GAP) for education for sustainable development and looks forward to the second phase of this initiative.

20.4 Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, we support the proposed framework for the implementation of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) beyond 2019. We are happy that Kenya has been selected by the United Nations to participate in the pilot global programme of Sustainable Development Initiatives (SDI) and Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's) roadmap. We will strengthen the science, technology and innovation bridge, the skill to supply and demand gap through increased expenditure, provision of bursaries, establishment of model STEM secondary schools and implementation of mentorship programmes to cultivate STEM interest in learners.

20.5 Kenya appreciates UNESCO's multidisciplinary approach to artificial intelligence and acknowledges the potential of artificial intelligence in supporting development, notably in the African continent. We welcome the organization of the subregional meetings and stand ready to support and contribute to this important process.

20.6 Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, Kenya fully subscribes to the importance of biosphere reserves, geoparks and world heritage sites as learning sites for sustainable development. We welcome the approval of the extension of

Malindi Watamu Biosphere Reserve to complete the Arabuko-Sokoke Forest. Kenya also appreciates the role of the international hydrological programme in supporting Member States to achieve SDG 6 on water and sanitation. The vital role of the ocean for the future of humanity is emphasised in SDG 14. Consequently, Kenya will be co-hosting the second United Nations Ocean Conference in 2020 in Lisbon. We warmly welcome you to the side event organized together with the Intergovernmental Oceanic Commission tomorrow, 14 November 2019.

20.7 Excellences, ladies and gentlemen, involvement of young people is critical to the implementation of Agenda 2030 and the United Nations 2030 Youth Strategy. Kenya continues to support efforts to foster youth participation in the design and delivery of UNESCO's programmes. As part of youth mobilization in Kenya, Kenya is actively revitalizing the creative industries, mapping buildings, capacities and in the promotion of intangible heritage and exploring new pathways for protection and valorization of natural heritage. We remain deeply committed to UNESCO's mandate in the promotion of ethics and values related to physical education and clean sports. Kenya has established a vibrant anti-doping agency. In this regard, Kenya is keen to host the next international conference of ministers and senior officials responsible for physical education and sports (MINEPS). I thank you.

21. The President:

Thank you very much your excellency. I now invite His Excellency Mr Majed Al-Noaimi, Minister of Education of Bahrain.

٢٢-١ السيد التميمي (البحرين):

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم، معالي رئيس المؤتمر العام، رئيس المجلس التنفيذي، المديرية العامة للمنظمة، أصحاب السعادة والسيدات، السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته، يسعدني في البداية أن أهني معالي رئيس المؤتمر العام بالثقة التي حظي بها من قبل الدول الأعضاء باختياره رئيساً للمؤتمر العام في دورته الأربعين. ويسرني أيضاً أن أشكر بكل معاني التقدير رئيسة المؤتمر العام السابق، معالي زهور العلوي للجهود المثمرة التي بذلتها. كما أنقل تحيات سيدي حضرة صاحب الجلالة، الملك حمد بن عيسى آل خليفة عاهل البلاد المفدى حفظه الله ورعاه، لهذا المؤتمر وتمنياته بالتوفيق والنجاح من أجل تحقيق الأهداف الإنسانية النبيلة التي تعمل من أجلها منظمة اليونسكو. كما أود أن أعبر معالي السيدة، أودري أزولاي، المديرية العامة للمنظمة عن خالص شكر وتقدير بلدي على ما بذلته من جهود مشكورة على رأس منظمنا خلال العامين الماضيين، ولما حققت من إنجازات مشهودة بالرغم من كل التحديات.

٢٢-٢ الحضور الكرام، اليوم نجتمع مجدداً في رحاب اليونسكو، في هذه المرحلة الانتقالية المهمة من تاريخ المنظمة، التي نحتاج فيها إلى مزيد من التعاون والتضامن والشراكة بين دولنا لمواجهة التحديات العديدة التي تواجه عالمنا ومنظمنا في الوقت نفسه، والتي تتعرض إلى مزيد من الضغوط بسبب الصعوبات المالية والتوترات التي تحتاج العالم وباتت تمس حق الإنسان في الحياة والحق في الحصول على الصحة والتعليم في ظل استمرار الحروب ومواجهة الهجرة واللجوء، مما يزيد الحاجة للعناية بالتربية في منظورها الإنساني، مؤكداً في هذا الإطار دعم مملكة البحرين لرؤية اليونسكو للتعليم واستراتيجيتها لعام ٢٠٣٠، وبذل كل الجهود لتنفيذ أهداف التنمية المستدامة التي أعلنت عنها المنظمة وخاصة الهدف ٤. ولتحجسد هذا التوجه، احتضنت مملكة البحرين مؤجراً الاجتماع الحادي عشر لوزراء التربية والتعليم العرب بالتعاون مع منظمة اليونسكو. وكانت السياسات التعليمية ضمن هذه الرؤية محور هذا الاجتماع المهم.

٢٢-٣ كما يسعدني أن أعبر عن شعورنا بالارتياح لما تضمنه مشروع البرنامج والميزانية للعامين القادمين من مشروعات طموحة تهدف إلى تعزيز توفير التعليم للجميع، وتأمين التنسيق العالمي لتحقيق الأهداف وتعظيم الاستفادة من العلوم والتكنولوجيا في هذا المجال مستذكراً بكل اعتراز جوانب التعاون المثمر بين مملكة البحرين وهذه المنظمة في أكثر من مجال، وخاصة عبر جائزة اليونسكو - الملك حمد بن عيسى آل خليفة لاستخدام تكنولوجيات المعلومات والاتصال في مجال التعليم، التي جاءت متسقة مع أهداف اليونسكو بل وأصبحت جزءاً لا يتجزأ من تشجيع المبادرات العالمية المتميزة في توظيف التكنولوجيات الحديثة في نشر التعليم وتوفيره للجميع.

٢٢-٤ الحضور الكرام، تحتفل مملكة البحرين هذا العام ٢٠١٩ بمئوية التعليم، حيث أنشئت أول مدرسة نظامية حكومية في مملكة البحرين في عام ١٩١٩، وهي مدرسة الهداية الخليفية التي كانت مفتاحاً رئيسياً لولوج بوابة الحداثة والتنوير منذ البدايات الأولى من القرن الماضي حتى اليوم. وقد قطعت مملكة البحرين شوطاً كبيراً في بناء التعليم وتطويره وتنويع مساراته حتى أصبح الحصول عليه متاحاً للجميع وأصبح إلزامياً ومجانياً. فأصبح نظامنا التعليمي يغطي كل الفئات التي تلحق بسلم التعليم بما فيهم الطلبة الذي يحتاجون إلى عناية خاصة. وهذا العام، افتتحنا صفراً في المرحلة الإعدادية للطلبة المصابين باضطراب التوحد بعد أن نجحنا في سياسة الدمج وأصبحت ٤٠% من مدارسنا تغطي جميع سياسات الدمج. وفي هذا المجال، أؤكد استعداد مملكة البحرين للتعاون المستمر مع هذه المنظمة العريقة وخصوصاً من خلال المراكز الموجودة فيها.

٢٢-٥ وأجدد شكري وتقديري للجهود التي بُذلت من قبل العاملين في هذه المنظمة لتنظيم هذا المؤتمر، مؤكداً دعم مملكة البحرين بقيادة جلالته الملك حفظه الله لهذه المنظمة التي تعمل دائماً لنشر التعليم والحوار والثقافة والتسامح، وهذا ما جعلنا نطبق مشروع المدارس المعززة للمواطنة وحقوق الإنسان في كافة المراحل التعليمية. وشكراً لإصغائكم، وتحياتي لمؤتمركم، بدوام التوفيق، والسلام عليكم ورحمة الله.

23. The President:

Thank you very much, Your Excellency. The next speaker on my list is Her Excellency, Ms Magdalena Gawin, Undersecretary of State at the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage of Poland

24.1 Poland:

Mr President of the General Conference, Madam Director-General, distinguished delegates, I would like to start by congratulating you, Mr President, on being appointed to this important position. I am convinced that under your leadership we will work efficiently and effectively. It is a great honour for me to speak before such a splendid audience on behalf of the Government of Poland at such an important moment during the 40th anniversary session. Every anniversary is a good time to reflect upon what has been achieved and what is ahead of us. I would like to stress that Poland strongly

supports UNESCO and its mission. We believe that cooperation in the fields of culture, science and education contributes significantly to achieving lasting peace and security. We will continue to support efforts to reform the Organization and enhance its prestige. I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Madam Director-General on a very ambitious and inspiring vision of making the Organization a place of reflection and intellectual exchange which focuses on the development and future of humanity.

24.2 Poland wants to take part in the reform processes initiated by Madam Director-General and that is why we have decided to stand this year for the Executive Board. As a founding member of UNESCO, we remain committed to its ideals and aspirations and as a candidate to the Executive Board, Poland renews that promise.

24.3 Ladies and gentlemen, UNESCO has to address a number of challenges, including those brought about by advances in science and technology, in particular digital technologies. The current session of the General Conference demonstrates the willingness to look for solutions based on a multidisciplinary and cross-sectoral approach, one of UNESCO's most important assets. In our view, ethical aspects of artificial intelligence, Open Educational Resources, and Open Science are a good choice of priorities that are vital for individual development and for the development of societies.

24.4 Activities in the field of culture remain a cornerstone of UNESCO's strength. UNESCO programmes in this area are conducive to mutual knowledge and an attitude of acceptance and mutual understanding. We are increasingly aware of the fact that heritage is a vehicle of identity and memory for societies, and that their identity and memory are essential for building the future. Poland considers measures to enhance the international protection of cultural heritage in all its dimensions to be one of the core priorities within the Organization's work. We also see a number of threats to heritage in today's world, resulting from armed conflicts, natural disasters and, for example, from urban pressure as it is in the case of the Gdańsk shipyard, being a symbol of the fall of the Iron Curtain in Europe. The only way to protect global heritage is to apply an integrated approach including measures to preserve heritage, an approach based on the principles of dialogue and respect for cultural diversity. The Warsaw Recommendation on Recovery and Reconstruction of Cultural Heritage is an example of this comprehensive approach, put forward in May 2018 and subsequently endorsed by the World Heritage Committee. The Warsaw Recommendation set universal guiding principles for the recovery and reconstruction and encompassing documentation, risk management plan and sustainability.

24.5 For years, Poland has been involved in rescuing cultural heritage across the world. We are ready to share our experience with the international community – a good example is the expertise and work recently established in the International Centre for Training and Research on Cultural Heritage under Threat in Wrocław. Poland attaches great importance to inter-religious and intercultural dialogue as a means of preventing conflict and building mutual trust and respect among nations. We highly value the UNESCO initiative "Revive the Spirit of Mosul" and we intend to continue supporting it. In relation to heritage, I would like to express my hope that the Memory of the World programme for the sustainable preservation and dissemination of documentary heritage to save the collective memory of societies, cultures, and civilizations will soon become operational again.

24.6 Ladies and gentlemen, disseminating the Organization's ideas among the wider public and turning them into practical measures is vital for strengthening its role. In this context, I would like to emphasize the role of National Committees. We also welcome the fact that the Organization intends to make full use of the potential of cooperation within the framework of the UNESCO networks. Distinguished delegates, let me end by stressing that we share the view that dialogue and the search for consensus are UNESCO's fundamental values. I am confident that the collaboration based on these values will allow us to achieve all of the Organization's priorities and successfully strengthen its effectiveness. Thank you very much for your attention.

25. **The President:**

Thank you very much Madam. The next speaker on our list is Mr Jan Jambon, Minister-President of the Government of Flanders and Flemish Minister of Culture of Belgium.

26.1 **Belgium:**

Dear Mr President of the General Conference, Dear Director-General, allow me to start by thanking you for the preparations for this session of the General Conference, with the valuable assistance of the Secretariat. Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, the world currently copes with a wide array of global challenges, ranging from armed conflicts, violent extremism and migration pressures, to the increasing impact of climate change, trade wars and digitalization, affecting our societies and economies.

26.2 Belgium believes that an effective multilateral system is key to common, global solutions to tackle the multitude of challenges that have implications for all of us. Therefore, we need a strong and performing multilateral system, and a strong and performing UNESCO. UNESCO acts as lead agency for the 2030 Education Agenda, protects our common heritage worldwide and supports scientific collaboration that can help us to deal with issues such as climate change and the loss of biodiversity. These ambitions merit an organization that can effectively achieve them with its partners. When you, Director-General Azoulay took office, you embarked on a strategic transformation of UNESCO to reform the Organization. Results have been achieved and the Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network (MOPAN) assessment earlier this year was pretty positive. Nevertheless, UNESCO should always strive to do better, building on the in-house expertise, and liaising with relevant external partners.

26.3 We value the expertise and professionalism offered by UNESCO staff, yet we notice the pressure on the secretariats of several cultural conventions and committees. It is essential to maintain strong expertise within the Secretariat in order to ensure UNESCO's credibility and performance. A deepened synergy and collaboration between the many conventions, programmes and initiatives, within and across the different sectors could help to alleviate some of the pressure. We are happy to assist UNESCO and support the work of UNESCO by allocating extrabudgetary resources. Last May, the Government of Flanders and UNESCO signed an updated trust fund agreement for the support of UNESCO's work in the field of sciences, which has been going strong for 20 years. We aim to dedicate new financial resources to a

selection of projects that is currently under evaluation in the areas of ocean science, freshwater management, biodiversity conservation and earth sciences.

26.4 Ladies and gentlemen, we are convinced that science and innovation can contribute greatly to global challenges such as climate change. Yet technological progress itself is also a transformative power that demands our attention. We consider the integration of ethical aspects in artificial intelligence applications and technology from the design phase onwards as very important. Therefore, we welcome the proposal for a standard-setting instrument on the ethics of artificial intelligence. Nevertheless, we would like to warn against a “one regulation fits all” approach.

26.5 Furthermore, Belgium is committed to an Open Science approach in which scientific research that is publicly funded should be publicly accessible as soon as possible according to the principle, “as open as possible, as closed as necessary”. We look forward to a new standard-setting instrument by UNESCO on open science, along those principles. Science, however, would be non-existent without proper education. We particularly welcome UNESCO’s endeavours to take the intellectual leadership in the global dialogue on the Futures of Education in an increasingly interconnected world. In this open approach to the different futures – in the plural – there should be no trade-off between equity and inclusion on the one hand and quality and relevance on the other. We cannot be ambitious enough in defending the right to excellent education.

26.6 Belgium acknowledges the guiding role of UNESCO’s work, via the Education 2030 Framework for Action in pursuing more inclusive education policies. This was certainly illustrated at the Global Education Meeting, which our country hosted in December last year. The meeting resulted in the Brussels Declaration, which clearly advocates Education for Citizenship in a Global Perspective – as a hallmark for the implementation of all SDGs. We were pleased to see how the outcomes of the Global Education Meeting inspired the 2019 High Level Political Forum in New York and the United Nations General Assembly. In addition to the ministerial education meeting during this session of the General Conference, a forum of ministers of culture will gather. We welcome this initiative that emphasizes the relevance of culture for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the use of UNESCO’s conventions and cultural programmes. For this event we would like to focus on two main priorities: cultural education and a broad participation in cultural life, including broad access to culture and digitalization. By protecting and providing access to documentary heritages, the Memory of the World Programme is also important for sharing knowledge to enhance mutual understanding. In this regard, Belgium hopes to be able to play its part in the comprehensive review as a responsible member of the Organization. Ladies and gentlemen, I thank you for your attention and wish you all a pleasant and interesting series of meetings, in this setting for international collaboration and mutual understanding. Thank you.

27. **The President:**

Thank you, your Excellency. I now invite H.E. Dr Matthew Opoku Prempeh, Minister of Education of Ghana.

28.1 **Ghana:**

Mr President of the General Conference, Mr Chairperson of the Executive Board, Mr Director-General of UNESCO, Excellencies, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen. It gives me much pleasure to have this opportunity to address the 40th session of the General Conference of UNESCO. Ghana congratulates you on your election as President of the 40th session. We wish you a successful tenure of office and assure you of our support.

28.2 Mr President, Ghana believes that the 40th session of the General Conference presents a good opportunity for UNESCO to deploy its unique experience and expertise as a multilateral agency for our common good. UNESCO’s added value lies in its ability to address complex challenges in an interdisciplinary manner. In that context, Mr President, we urge UNESCO to continue its work on artificial intelligence (AI), universal access to information and scientific knowledge, promotion of knowledge systems and the diversity of cultural expressions, women and girls’ education as well as education of other vulnerable groups in society. Furthermore, as a global promoter of peace, UNESCO needs to re-imagine how the ICTs and in particular the Internet, could be harnessed to create knowledge societies and address violent extremism in all its forms.

28.3 Mr President, it is time for UNESCO to unleash the transformative power inherent in education, the sciences and culture to secure a better world for humankind. Ghana, therefore, would like to see the preliminary proposals for document 41 C/4 (2022-2029) addressing the aforementioned domains. This will undoubtedly consolidate the gains of the present Medium-Term Strategy, the final programme and budget of which this General Conference stands ready to approve.

28.4 Mr President, after a critical evaluation of the various budget scenarios presented by the Executive Board, Ghana notes with satisfaction the explanation by the Director-General urging Member States to endorse the \$534.6 million budget ceiling. It is our hope that the Director-General and the Secretariat will deliver on the programmes and effectively implement the agreed priorities of Africa, gender equality, youth and the SDGs. Additionally, this budget ceiling will enable the Director-General to consolidate the gains made in the Strategic Transformation processes – to re-organize the internal structures of the Secretariat and strengthen core programmes and the institutional systems upon which the Organization was founded.

28.5 Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, climate change has caught up with humanity. The world’s resources continue to be at the mercy of the climate menace thereby, adversely impacting our collective efforts towards sustainable development. Let us not forget, Mr President, that it is a shared responsibility to reverse the negative impact of climate change by doing things differently in today’s world of technological innovation. To that end, Ghana associates itself with the programmes of the Natural Sciences Sector, particularly, in the basic and applied sciences, engineering and ICTs which are linked to robotics, genomics and bioinformatics, as well as artificial intelligence. We avail ourselves to UNESCO programmes in these areas.

28.6 Mr President, the Government of Ghana finds it expedient to support UNESCO’s actions in education in the Africa region. By this, on the occasion of the 40th session of the General Conference of UNESCO, Ghana is proposing to upgrade to a category 2 status, the Institute for Educational Planning and Administration (IEPA) of the University of Cape Coast of

Ghana. The IEPA intends to expand its work of educational planning and research, policy formulation and training for educational leadership to the West Africa region and beyond. The Government of Ghana will contribute a total of \$3.4 million annually towards the operations of both the proposed IEPA Centre and the AIMS-Ghana category 2 institute. We call on all Member States to support this important initiative which will transform educational planning and address human resources and systems needs of education in Africa.

28.7 Allow me Mr President to express Ghana's appreciation to UNESCO, the Government of Norway and partners for the ongoing support to make a critical intervention on the teacher targets through the Norwegian Teacher Initiative project. Ghana hopes for an outcome of a comprehensive national teacher policy document based upon the UNESCO benchmarks. Mr President, Ghana appreciates the joint advisory mission that was undertaken to examine the impact of the Elmina Bay project on the outstanding universal value (OUV) of the Elmina Castle. Following the report, the Government of Ghana has taken steps to address the issues raised on these international properties which are dear to UNESCO. Indeed, on the 25th anniversary of the UNESCO Slave Route Project, the significance of these forts and castles, particularly with respect to education on the transatlantic slave trade and contemporary slavery, cannot be overemphasized.

28.8 His Excellency, President Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo declared this year as the "Year of Return" to commemorate the 400th anniversary of the arrival of the first African slaves in the English colony of Jamestown. We are grateful to the Director-General for the support in the celebration of the "Year of Return". Beyond the "Year of Return", Ghana has put in place concrete measures to consolidate the gains and achievements made in 2019.

28.9 In conclusion, let me finally inform you that Ghana is vying for a seat on the Executive Board as well as the councils of the Man and Biosphere (MAB) and the Information for All (IFAP) programmes at the forthcoming elections of the General Conference. We call on all Member States to support our candidature bid. I thank you for your attention.

29. **The President:**

Thank you your Excellency. The next speaker is Her Excellency, Dr. Dipu Moni, Minister of Education of Bangladesh

30.1 **Bangladesh:**

Mr President of the General Conference, Mr Chairperson of the Executive Board, Madam Director-General, honourable ministers, excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, I have the great pleasure and honour to address this august gathering for the first time on behalf of my country, Bangladesh. I extend my heartiest congratulations to Ambassador Ahmet Altay Cengizer of Turkey on his election as the President of the 40th session of the General Conference. I am confident that we will have a successful General Conference under his leadership and guidance. I also wish to register our deep appreciation to the President of the 39th session of the General Conference, Ambassador Zohour Alaoui of Morocco for her tireless work for our Organization during the last biennium. Ms Audrey Azoulay, our Director-General, deserves our special commendation for her timely initiatives to address the present and future challenges that UNESCO is facing. Please be assured, Madam Director General, of our full support in your endeavours.

30.2 Excellencies, dear friends, we are passing through difficult and challenging times, both globally as well within our Organization. As a nation, we remain steadfast to the principles of multilateralism and believe it to be the most effective tool for resolving global problems and create global good. It is only through dialogue and building consensus that we can hope to overcome the challenges. We need to concentrate more on what unites us rather than what divides us.

30.3 Mr President, UNESCO's work in education, science, culture, social science, information and communication are vitally important for building peace, harmony, mutual respect and understanding. Bangladesh's commitment to UNESCO's mandate and mission remain as strong and unwavering as ever. As a member of the Executive Board, we are supporting the Organization to deliver on its core areas of competence. In this context, we support the Director-General's Strategic Transformation of UNESCO and note with appreciation the progress achieved so far. We hope, the High-Level Reflection Group, through an inclusive and consultative process, will provide us with valuable recommendations for charting a roadmap for the future direction of UNESCO.

30.4 Mr President, the father of our nation, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, aspired to build a "Sonar Bangla" – a Bangladesh of Gold – a country that would be free from oppression, hunger and deprivation. The torchbearer of his vision and dream is none other than his worthy daughter, our Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has embarked on a mission to realize his dream. Her development roadmaps, Vision 2021 and Vision 2041, place an inclusive and participatory development model at the centre of all national development efforts.

30.5 Naturally, Bangladesh is strongly committed to Agenda 2030. We have integrated Sustainable Development Goals in the seventh five-year plan, mainstreaming it in all sectors of the economy. We have developed a national action plan and monitoring framework for the SDGs. These are important building blocks to guide strategies to achieve the SDGs. We believe, attainment of the SDGs greatly hinges upon the attainment of SDG 4 on inclusive and equitable quality education. Today, Bangladesh is globally acknowledged as a development role model. Our goal is to be become a role model for quality education.

30.5 Our approach to education is two pronged, vertical as well as horizontal. On one hand, we are working to ensure access to education for each and every child, including children with special needs. Special monetary and non-monetary policies and programmes have been undertaken to ensure their access to public education. We have introduced mother language-based education at pre-primary and primary level for five ethnic minorities (Chakma, Marma, Tripura, Garo and Sadri) in our country. On the other hand, our aim is to equip our children with the knowledge, skill, training and education to prepare them for the future world of work. Improving the quality of education with emphasis on e-learning and enhancing the quality of teachers are our major priorities.

30.6 We have introduced a digital curriculum to reach 1.73 million primary school students and launched a digital primary education project under which more than 500 model primary schools will be set up across the country. In 2018-2019, we have set up 370 ICT Learning Centres in 64 districts of the country. Our children will now be using computers from their first year of school even in the remotest corners of the country.

30.7 Bangladesh deeply appreciates the official launching of UNESCO's global initiative on the Futures of Education. With the advent of new technologies, including artificial intelligence, big data and machine learning, launching of UNESCO's global initiative on the Futures of Education is most timely and we commend UNESCO for the initiative.

30.8 Mr President, the fourth industrial revolution – Internet of Things (IoT), robotics, virtual reality (VR) and artificial intelligence (AI) – is taking place at an astoundingly fast pace. It will have an unparalleled and disruptive impact on our societies and could fundamentally transform the way we think, live, and work. The existing legal and social protection systems are unable to keep up with new and emerging technologies. In this context, we acknowledge UNESCO's multidisciplinary approach to AI as well as its global ethical implications for peace, cultural diversity, gender equality, and sustainable development and we commend UNESCO's initiative to develop a standard-setting instrument on the ethics of artificial intelligence.

30.9 Mr President, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, UNESCO is a symbol of our hope and uniquely positioned to take a leadership role in the promotion of education, science and culture and communication thereby making a positive impact in lives of the people around the world. I assure you that Bangladesh will continue to fulfil its obligation and do even more to strengthen the Organization to carry out its mandate effectively, efficiently and meaningfully. I thank you all.

31. **The President:**

Thank you very much Madam. The next speaker is His Excellency, Professor Manuel Heito, Minister of Science, Technology and Higher Education of Portugal.

32.1 **Portugal:**

(Discours prononcé en portugais ; texte en portugais fourni par la délégation) :

Senhor Presidente da Conferência Geral Senhora Directora-Geral, caras e caros Colegas, Minhas senhoras e meus senhores, A fábrica social do conhecimento convoca hoje todas as nossas sociedades. Não há desenvolvimento social ou crescimento económico, sem que a base social de apoio da educação, da ciência e da cultura se reforce e se alargue. Em todo o lado é assim porque o recrutamento para o conhecimento apenas é possível através de um processo renovado de confiança e interesse por parte das novas gerações. Partilhar com os outros a sede e a fome de saber, e fazer com eles o difícil e permanente caminho da experiência tem sido o papel principal da Unesco que temos de continuar a reforçar. Inicio assim esta comunicação com uma manifestação de apoio e de compromisso com a UNESCO e com a estratégia traçada para os próximos anos, centrada numa melhor integração no sistema das Nações Unidas, no âmbito do processo de transformação estratégica em curso.

32.2 Permitam-me que vos lembre Homero e a viagem de regresso de Ulisses a casa, a qual é também a *Odisséia do conhecimento*: a obrigação de uma nova viagem, estimulando e recriando a memória, construindo as lições da experiência e colocando à prova o conhecimento anterior que logo se esquece e se supera. Sabemos hoje que todos os processos de apropriação de conhecimento talvez possam seguir esta metáfora antiga: *uma viagem, um regresso, uma nova partida*. Mas hoje vivemos novos desafios e grandes oportunidades. O processo acelerado de transição digital induzido pelo crescimento explosivo da internet e das redes sociais nela suportadas, juntamente com uma crescente e exigente mobilização de esforços para fazer face às alterações climáticas que a todos nos afetam e à necessidade de estimular o desenvolvimento económico, reduzindo as desigualdades que continuam persistir nas nossas sociedades, exigem a procura crescente de novos conhecimentos para incorporação em processos de decisão. São fenómenos emergentes que obrigam a rever e possivelmente a ampliar os modos de produção, apropriação e difusão de conhecimento.

32.3 Sabemos bem que as condições de contextualização do conhecimento para a sua apropriação ganham especial acuidade na escola, onde a democratização do acesso à educação se acompanha frequentemente de uma margem elevada de abandono, rejeição e insucesso, reveladores de uma dificuldade de socialização e de aceitação dos modos de aprendizagem disponíveis. Sabemos ainda que a contextualização dos saberes desafia não só a escola, mas também as instituições científicas e culturais, assim como a possibilidade de formação generalizada de cultura científica e técnica.

32.4 Vemos assim o fenómeno social dos riscos públicos que emergem, designadamente em associação com as alterações climáticas, juntamente com o enorme desequilíbrio demográfico mundial e no contexto da formação e apropriação social do conhecimento e da sociedade em rede, essencialmente como uma tremenda oportunidade de motivação para o conhecimento e para a participação cívica de todos na difusão dos saberes. É claramente uma tremenda oportunidade para o desejo de saber e de dar a saber, para a formação de práticas democráticas de debate, questionamento e participação fundamentada nas decisões.

32.5 No plano quotidiano da fronteira entre o individual e o colectivo é provável que a medicina e a investigação biomédica venham a estar cada vez mais na fronteira social dessas decisões e de muitos dos conflitos que emergem, agravados pelo debate em torno da liberdade de saber e de não saber, de escolher e, esperemos, de poder escolher, talvez e de alguma maneira, a própria forma de viver e morrer. Mas é a sociedade do conhecimento e da informação, juntamente com os novos sistemas de observação da Terra e de sensorização, que tornam possível pensar-se nesse avanço de civilização, que por certo não deixará de ser controverso e doloroso, mas que fixará a solidez do enraizamento das práticas de apropriação e da partilha aberta do conhecimento na mais exigente das motivações contemporâneas.

32.6 A transição digital e o seu impacto nas sociedades através dos avanços nas formas de processar quantidades massivas de informação, designadamente através de métodos de Inteligência Artificial, traz-nos diariamente a evidência de um mundo crescentemente complexo em termos sociais, tecnológicos e relacionais. Tem ainda conduzido a uma

aumento exponencial da incerteza e de contextos de grande vulnerabilidade, pelo que esta consciência de múltiplas dissonâncias e perplexidades é simultaneamente um convite à aprendizagem e re-avaliação da própria natureza do conhecimento humano. É neste contexto que a produção e a apropriação social dos saberes passa crescentemente pela necessidade de rever mapas comportamentais e de formação de atitudes, devendo inclusivamente permitir a antevisão de narrativas inovadoras em diversos sectores da educação e do ensino superior, designadamente em termos de metodologias de “aprendizagem baseada em projecto” e das praticas de experimentação.

32.7 Por um lado, a apropriação social do conhecimento, incluindo a análise sistemática de saberes e praticas em comunidades vulneráveis, assim a adoção de novos saberes e praticas por essas comunidades, exige um esforço de análise e conceção de estratégias de ação, que podem ser facilitadas por objetos e o design de novos sistemas e produtos. Os enormes desafios da última década, bem como os desafios que se prefiguram - culturais, históricos, sociais, económicos, mediáticos - convidam ao desenvolvimento de competências partilhadas, de redes participativas e novas aceções de mais-valia criativa, desmontando e exigindo a reformulação de paradigmas antigos de autoria, território, património, competência e solidariedade.

32.8 No centro destes desafios está uma nova consciência do mundo de hoje: futuros de incerteza, contextos de crescente vulnerabilidade, reequacionamento de modos de conhecer e produzir as realidades coletivas. Num aparente paradoxo, estes territórios projetivos de incerteza e estas comunidades vulneráveis poderão vir a ser a chave para o emergir de um tecido social mais saudável. Exige certamente promover saberes, assim como estimular mecanismos de “protecção social” dos mais fracos, o que leva á necessidade de perceber e promover o estudo e o apoio á conceção de políticas publicas orientadas para futuros de incerteza, dando ênfase a lugares de vulnerabilidade. Áreas de aplicação incluem, entre outras, a saúde pública, a energia e a sustentabilidade, assim como os usos do espaço público. Áreas horizontais do saber incluem, entre outras, a utilização de tecnologias de informação e comunicação, a governança de riscos, a capacitação de cidadãos.

32.9 Foi neste sentido que Portugal está empenhado em Iniciativas de Conhecimento para o Desenvolvimento, incluindo a dinamização “Centro para a Formação Avançada de Cientistas oriundos de países de língua portuguesa”, um Centro estabelecido sob os auspícios da UNESCO, para capacitar instituições em África, apoiando a formação avançada de recursos humanos, a aquisição de novas competências e contribuindo para combater a “fuga de cérebros”, fortalecer o tecido empresarial local e desenvolver novas formas de cultura científica. Os desígnios da UNESCO estão presentes nas políticas que implementamos e gostaria também de sublinhar a alteração da legislação nacional de forma a conferir condições particulares de acesso e frequência do ensino superior em Portugal a estudantes em situação de emergência humanitária, em linha com as políticas nacionais de acolhimento de refugiados e iniciativas privadas, como a Plataforma de Apoio aos Estudantes Sírios, promovida pelo Presidente Jorge Sampaio.

32.10 Senhor Presidente, Excelências, quero deixar claro que Portugal apoia os esforços da UNESCO no debate ético sobre a Inteligência Artificial e o seu envolvimento na elaboração de recomendações sobre a partilha aberta do conhecimento. Precisamos de ser ambiciosos e de colocar a UNESCO na primeira linha do multilateralismo, tal como o secretário-geral das Nações Unidas aqui recordou ontem – a defesa de um mundo multipolar e de um multilateralismo inclusivo, capaz de lutar contra o racismo e a intolerância, de proteger o planeta e de utilizar o conhecimento para combater as desigualdades e as fracturas sociais e económicas. Neste contexto, termino com uma referencia explicita para os seguintes aspetos de grande importância: a proposta de proclamação pela UNESCO do *Dia Mundial da Língua Portuguesa*, que pretende ser uma afirmação do multilinguismo e da diversidade linguística no mundo; *Conferência Europeia das Humanidades*, que terá lugar em Portugal, no primeiro semestre de 2021, durante a Presidência Portuguesa do Conselho da União Europeia, com organização conjunta com a UNESCO. Gostaria ainda de vos convidar para estarem presentes amanhã, pelas 18h30, no evento de alto nível, que organizamos em conjunto com a Comissão Oceanográfica Internacional, sobre a *Década das Ciências Oceânicas para o Desenvolvimento Sustentável*, bem como para participarem na *Segunda Conferência dos Oceanos das Nações Unidas*, que se realizará em Lisboa no próximo ano. Muito obrigado pela Vossa atenção.

33. **The President:**

Thank you your Excellency. I now invite His Excellency Mr Abdullahi Godah Barre, Minister of Education Culture and Higher Education of Somalia.

34.1 **Somalia:**

Mr President of the General Conference, Mr Chairperson of the Executive Board, Madam Director-General, honourable delegates, ladies and gentlemen. Mr President, allow me to congratulate you on behalf of the delegation of the Federal Republic of Somalia, on your election as President of the General Conference. Mr President, as a representative of my Government, let me start by emphasizing that Somalia believes that the work and mandate of UNESCO is crucial to peace and security around the world, especially in promoting collaboration among nations through education, science, culture and communication. UNESCO plays a vital role in translating the sustainable development goals into concrete action. These goals, which in turn, are essential to combatting the urgent environmental, political and economic challenges facing our world.

34.2 This is particularly significant for Somalia in our nation-building efforts. The 2030 Agenda has been aptly described as the “youth agenda”. We are a population of which 70% are under the age of 30, making our population one of the youngest in the world. Our current strategic education framework “Somalia 2030 Education for Everyone” echoes the ethos of “Leaving no one behind”. Today, our country has one of the world’s lowest enrolment rates for primary school-aged children. What this means in real terms is that millions of our children and young people are in desperate need of educational support. We have chosen to start from a belief in a future filled with opportunity – a future where, with the right education and skills, our country can find new routes to growth, built on human capital. We believe that education and skills provide the best route out of poverty, inequality, and instability, and our best safeguard against conflict and extremism.

The Ministry of Education, Culture and Higher Education of Somalia affirms that the implementation of “Somalia 2030 Education for Everyone” priority programmes directly corresponds to the accomplishment of SDG 4 and its targets.

34.3 Mr President, we believe that the first step in the right direction starts with quality education. Our Ministry has been working intensively across key areas in education in Somalia to ensure the delivery of good and adequate education, for all. These key areas are: the access to education; the quality of education; and the supervision of the education sector in Somalia, both in the public and private sectors. It is our vision that by 2030, all girls and boys will be able to access quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education. By 2030, all girls and boys in Somalia will be able to complete free, equitable and quality primary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes. By 2030 in secondary school, children will learn the core scientific, humanistic and/or technical knowledge needed to continue their studies. By 2030, all students in Somalia will have equitable access to a world-class higher education system leading to better opportunities for employment and significant contributions to a knowledge-based economy. This is our vision and we are tirelessly working towards these goals. While our challenges are many, we choose to focus on our potential and the achievements we've so far managed to accomplish.

34.4 Mr President, due to our recent efforts in standardizing and reforming the education system in Somalia, while working towards ensuring quality education for all, we saw a record number of pupils across Somalia enrolled to take the primary and secondary school-leaving examinations. We witnessed a dramatic increase in enrolment in the national examinations since they were reinstated in 2016. This dramatic increase in students sitting their primary and secondary exams is due to the joint efforts between the federal and State ministries of education, its partners, the communities and donors in ensuring that Somali pupils enroll and remain in school until they complete their primary and secondary schooling. We have also put in place mechanisms of evaluating, as well as developing the capacities of schoolteachers. We are now in the process of piloting an online teacher training course to ensure the delivery of quality education for all students. Similarly, we are currently looking into ways of digitizing school textbooks, in order to enrich the content, make them more affordable and equip our pupils with the necessary tools to learn on par with international standards. In this regard, UNESCO remains an invaluable asset, in providing the technical guidance and best practices from similar projects, in contexts similar to ours’.

34.5 Mr President, another area in which we have recently made significant strides is the culture sector. Somalia is facing the great challenge of rebuilding every facet of nationhood. Crucially, we recognize that culture is an essential component for the reconstruction of the Somali social fabric. The post-conflict restoration of the social, political and economic structures of Somalia can only be achieved and sustained if there is a shared common understanding and interest in what constitutes Somali heritage. It is therefore necessary to reinforce the efforts to rehabilitate the culture sector in Somalia and enable it to play its role in promoting shared values and dialogue, which are both vital instruments in building sustainable peace. With this in mind, we have sought to establish a cultural heritage management approach in Somalia.

34.6 We recognize the importance of our cultural and natural heritage, in all their facets, for our nation’s post-conflict reconstruction and we have made significant progress in this area. I am pleased to announce that Somalia has re-established its National Commission for UNESCO earlier this year, with the aim to strengthen collaborations with the Organization, notably in the field of culture. On behalf of Somalia, I am honoured to announce our Government’s commitment to increase the protection of Somalia’s cultural property, as well as our cultural and natural heritage, through the ratification of UNESCO conventions. We have recently passed four UNESCO culture conventions in our cabinet, and they are now being debated in our parliament. They will hopefully soon all be ratified. The conventions in questions are the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict, the 1972 Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, and the 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions.

34.7 Somalia has also recently undertaken the complete rehabilitation of our national museum, the national theatre, our national library and the Academy for Arts and Sciences. We recognize the importance of safeguarding our culture as a means of national identity, peace building, reconciliation and sustainable development. We are counting on UNESCO and its Member States’ support in capacity building to strengthen our legislation and policies, undertake inventories of our cultural heritage and increase our capacities to protect and promote our culture for the sustainable development of Somalia. For any of you who have seen photographs and video footage of Somalia dating back to the 1960s, you have witnessed the peace and prosperity that used to reign in Somalia. I am confident that with the vision of our Government, the will of the Somali people and the support of UNESCO and the international community, we will once again be able to enjoy the rich cultural heritage and diversity that Somalia has to offer its people and the world. We consider heritage reconstruction not merely a matter of design and resources; at stake is the re-visioning and reconstruction of people’s identities and sense of community.

34.8 Mr President, Somalia deeply believes in the principles of UNESCO: tolerance, respect for culture and heritage, respect of difference, in ways that promote continued dialogue and peaceful coexistence: these are the ideals that counter much of the insecurity we witness around the world today. Somalia is steadfast in upholding these principles, we strive to incorporate them into every facet of our nation building. Let me conclude my intervention by saying that me standing here today, addressing you, marks a new beginning for Somalia. We have not participated in the UNESCO General Conference properly since 1988. I share that with you because I believe that it is a cause for optimism and hope that Somalia is finally out of its recent traumatic past, and before us now lies the road to healing, development and progress, for all Somalis. Thank you.

35. **The President:**

Thank you very much your Excellency. The next speaker is His Excellency Mr Mansour Gholami, Minister of Science, Research and Technology of, the Islamic Republic of Iran.

36.1 Islamic Republic of Iran:

Mr President of the General Conference, Mr Chairperson of the Executive Board, Madam Director-General, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, First of all, congratulations to His Excellency Mr Cengizer upon his election as President of the 40th session of the General Conference. I would also like to extend my profound gratitude to Her Excellency, Madam Alaoui, the esteemed outgoing President of the 39th session of the General Conference, for her unsparing efforts during her tenure.

36.2 Dear colleagues, UNESCO was founded as a unique soft power for the defences of peace beyond the political and economic arrangements of the governments. To safeguard an efficient multilateral approach for a better world, we adore its uniqueness in the United Nations system. Such an intellectual watchtower is expected to distance itself from politicization. The visionary wish of UNESCO's founders was aimed at a moral and intellectual paradigm embraced by a collective politics of the mind.

36.3 Today, we witness the phenomena of extremism, violence, and the widespread and unprecedented destruction of cultural heritage in some parts of the world, which mainly stem from deficiencies and inappropriate educational practices. One example is the accessibility of computer games which propagate hatred and psychologically prepare children for violent behaviour. UNESCO can inspire the worldwide educational systems and media networks by launching a global campaign entitled "The Next Generation, the More Committed Generation" (NG-MCG) to create and disseminate free virtual games promoting sensitivity towards human dignity, respect for nature and cultural heritage.

36.4 Madam Director-General, I am aware of your efforts to introduce the Strategic Transformation, which has been under discussion by Member States. What is needed here is an intensified orientation towards the promotion of UNESCO's ideals in their totality for the sake of a renewed focus on the *raison d'être* of this House. A standing dialogue would definitely help to keep that spirit. It is clear that all conventions, resolutions, programmes and documents approved here should successfully find their ways in which to realize UNESCO's ideals; otherwise, in practice, there may be a danger that they create unhelpful controversies rather than serve as an element of rapprochement among nations. The periodic review of documents adopted can clarify the extent to which the Organization's ideals are being fulfilled.

36.5 Nowadays, the intersectoral capacity of UNESCO is recognized. As the Minister of Science, Research and Technology of my country, I would like to wish and emphasize that UNESCO should support policies aimed at preventing scientific discrimination in education and to enable the countries of the South to access educational and scientific resources, thus reducing the scientific gap between North and South.

36.6 Dear colleagues, climate and environmental changes have pronounced effects in many regions, with extensive negative consequences to the social, cultural and economic infrastructure of the countries. Fortunately, this issue has been placed on UNESCO's agenda. In this context, the 2019 edition of the UNESCO Avicenna Prize for Ethics in Science is dedicated to ethics-related activities on climate change, to reward activities in the field of "Ethics of Environment", with a special thematic focus on the ethics of climate change and environmental sustainability.

36.7 Iran is proud to have proposed and sponsored the UNESCO Avicenna Prize for Ethics in Science, a unique initiative which highlights the critical importance of ethics in our fast-moving and technologically enamoured world. It is my pleasure that the fifth edition of the Avicenna Prize will be awarded during this session of the General Conference. Thank you.

37. The President:

Thank you, your Excellency. Now I invite His Excellency Mr Sergiy Kyslytsya, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ukraine.

38.1 Ucrania:

Señor Presidente, señora Directora General, señor Presidente del Consejo Ejecutivo, distinguidos delegados: el debate de hoy demuestra una vez más la importancia de respaldar y fortalecer la misión y función que desempeña la UNESCO en la consolidación de la paz internacional, el respeto universal de los derechos humanos, promoviendo la cooperación entre las naciones. Compartimos plenamente la preocupación por las amenazas para el mundo expresada por la Directora General ayer. Vivimos en el mundo donde conflictos, desastres, atentados terroristas y violaciones del derecho internacional provocan la devastación del inigualable patrimonio cultural y natural mundial que ha sido estropeado e ilegalmente destruido parcial o completamente. La resolución del Consejo de Seguridad de las Naciones Unidas 2347 reafirmó la función de la UNESCO en la salvaguardia y la preservación del patrimonio cultural en peligro, dotándola de un firme mandato para el mantenimiento de la seguridad cultural. Siendo uno de los pilares del sistema de las Naciones Unidas, la UNESCO tiene que ejecutar este mandato basándose en los propósitos y principios de la Carta de las Naciones Unidas. En este espíritu, Ucrania se suma a los demás Estados Miembros para apoyar el proceso de transformación estratégica de la Organización, que debe tener en cuenta las lecciones aprendidas y adoptar las medidas concretas para lograr marcar una diferencia sobre el terreno.

38.2 Señor Presidente: a consecuencia de la ocupación temporaria de Crimea por Rusia, en la península prosiguen las violaciones masivas y sistemáticas de los derechos humanos y de las libertades fundamentales, como lo reflejan los reportes de la Directora General sobre la situación en Crimea, Ucrania, en las esferas de competencias de la UNESCO. Las acciones devastadoras de la potencia ocupante constituyen un peligro grave para la preservación del valor histórico y cultural universal, así como la autenticidad de bienes del patrimonio cultural en el territorio temporalmente ocupado de Crimea. Las actividades dirigidas por la UNESCO para la protección del patrimonio cultural mundial en Crimea se ven exacerbadas por la persistente negación del acceso a la península de los mecanismos internacionales de supervisión, lo cual es violación flagrante por parte de la potencia ocupante del derecho internacional y las resoluciones adoptadas por la Asamblea General de las Naciones Unidas al respecto. Bajo estas circunstancias continuará el monitoreo directo de la situación, implementando 11 decisiones del Consejo Ejecutivo. El seguimiento de la situación en la República Autónoma de Crimea, Ucrania sigue siendo de importancia capital para romper este bloqueo informativo.

38.3 Estimados colegas: observamos con satisfacción que la igualdad de género sigue siendo una de las dos prioridades globales de la UNESCO. Ucrania está junto a la UNESCO transmitiendo claramente el mensaje de que debemos velar porque las mujeres y los hombres, las jóvenes y los jóvenes gocen de igualdad de oportunidades, opciones, capacidades, el poder, el saber como ciudadanos iguales. La segunda década del siglo XXI planteó en abundancia nuevos desafíos a los cuales la UNESCO debe responder de manera rápida y apropiada. Los retos que afrontamos están cada vez más relacionados con los temas políticos. Lo cual suscita discusiones alrededor de la pertenencia de ciertos asuntos más problemáticos a la luz del mandato de la UNESCO. Desde nuestro punto de vista, existe un criterio claro que ayuda a abordar tales desafíos, en particular es saber si los derechos de personas ordinarias son relevantes al mandato de la UNESCO. Si comparten este punto de vista, no hay otra solución, sino la participación inmediata de la UNESCO con su mandato extraordinario, si lo tenemos siempre en mente a la hora de tomar las decisiones y enfrentar las acciones concretas en el marco de la UNESCO, nuestra Organización está bien encaminada. Agradezco su atención.

39. **The President:**

The next speaker is His Excellency Mr Adrian Cioroianu, Ambassador, Permanent Delegate of Romania.

40.1 **Roumanie:**

Merci beaucoup Monsieur le Président de la Conférence générale, Monsieur le Président du Conseil exécutif, Madame la Directrice générale, Excellences, Mesdames et Messieurs, chers amis. Je tiens tout d'abord à exprimer le support de la Roumanie pour l'ensemble des objectifs de la 40^e session de la Conférence générale de l'UNESCO, qui reflètent les priorités de notre Organisation et des États membres, dans un contexte global très complexe du point de vue stratégique et politique. Je saisis cette opportunité pour exprimer la satisfaction envers le projet de Programme et du budget pour 2020-2021, qui offrira davantage de support dans l'accomplissement des engagements que nous, les États membres, avons assumés collectivement. Quatre ans après l'adoption de l'Agenda 2030 pour le développement durable, la 40^e Conférence générale est organisée dans un contexte qui réclame davantage la prise de mesures concrètes et plus d'efforts pour atteindre les Objectifs de développement durable.

(L'orateur poursuit en anglais)

40.2 Distinguished participants, in November 2018, Romania has set the necessary national framework to support the accomplishment of all 17 SDGs, by the adoption of the National Strategy for Sustainable Development. In this challenging undertaking we benefit from the relentless support and key coordination of UNESCO, to whom I would like to extend my thanks and appreciation. We all agree that the attainment of SDG 4 has been revealed as crucial to achieving the 2030 Agenda. The next remaining decade needs to be approached with renewed determination and commitment in order to accomplish the goal on education. Our endeavours in achieving SDG 4 currently focus on fostering inclusion – inclusion of all learners and equal opportunities to quality education.

40.3 In 2017, we launched an ambitious, large-scale project entitled "Relevant Curriculum, Open Education for All", in order to implement the curricular reform started in 2012. It aims to ensure the successful implementation of the new national curriculum, as well as to address the early school-leaving phenomenon, by means of in-service teacher training, as well as other specific objectives targeting the pupils belonging to vulnerable groups. As high-quality educational materials are instrumental for this undertaking, open educational resources are to be developed within the project. Thus, we fully support the adoption of the Recommendation on Open Education Resources and would like to capitalize upon it. At the same time, UNESCO's initiative for a global convention on the recognition of higher education qualifications is appropriate and very much welcomed, as nowadays universities become more and more a global campus of learners, while an increasing number of people pursue academic and professional mobility.

40.4 Ladies and gentlemen, the opportunities, as well as the challenges posed by artificial intelligence are the main themes of numerous debates at both European and global level. The recent adoption of the Recommendation on Artificial Intelligence of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), or the Beijing Consensus on Artificial Intelligence and Education, are two examples of the outcomes of these undertakings. This year, during its first Presidency of the Council of the European Union, Romania proposed AI on the discussion agenda in the field of education and training. The use of AI may have a positive impact in various areas, including education, science or culture. Romania fully supports the idea of a recommendation on the ethics of artificial intelligence as a standard setting instrument that would guide the undertakings in the field of AI at national and international levels. Therefore, we would like to commend UNESCO's initiative on addressing these aspects, as well as the setting up of an international research centre on AI in Slovenia.

40.5 As far as the research and innovation sector is concerned, in connection with SDG 9 – industry, innovation and infrastructure – regional and national strategies for smart specialization are under development, at the ministerial level, which will support the concentration of public resources in sectors with economic relevance. The institutional strategic plan provides financial support for scientific events, fairs and international exhibitions, editing of technical-scientific books, consulting, evaluations, awarding of outstanding achievements in science and technology, actions for early product validation, and first production capabilities in the field of essential generic technologies. The programme to increase economic competitiveness within the strategic plan is oriented towards investments in the research infrastructure of pan-European interest, included in the list "European Strategy Forum on Research Infrastructures", such as the laser installation "Extreme Light Infrastructure" and the DANUBIUS International Centre for Advanced Studies on River-Sea Systems, part of the European Union strategy for the Danube region. As well, we welcome the development of hub-type clusters around the Măgurele "Extreme Light Infrastructure" facility, through partnerships between institutes, industry and local administration, in order to use new technologies in the supply chain within specific industrial sectors, such as space technologies and eco-technologies.

40.6 Regarding the UNESCO Global Geoparks programme, in Romania we are proud to set high standards in terms of management of UNESCO designations, through the UNESCO geopark that we have in our country. The geopark team

is using an innovative approach to develop an infrastructure for geo-tourism and education, based on iconic geological assets and the intangible heritage that has been unfolding over generations in the region.

(The speaker continues in French)

40.7 Mesdames et Messieurs, avant de conclure, je tiens à réitérer la détermination de la Roumanie de soutenir les efforts et l'activité de l'UNESCO dans tous les domaines de son mandat, ainsi que de renforcer notre coopération avec les États Membres, afin d'accomplir la mission de notre Organisation. Je vous remercie de votre attention.

Mr Karimov (Azerbaijan) takes the Chair

41. **The President:**

Thank you very much your Excellency. Honourable delegates, in the absence of the President, I am pleased and honoured to resume the debate, and I have the pleasure to invite to the podium Her Excellency Ms Sahar Baassiri, Ambassador, Permanent Delegate of Lebanon to UNESCO.

٤٢-١ السيدة بعاصيري (لبنان):

السيد رئيس المؤتمر العام، السيد رئيس المجلس التنفيذي، السيدة المديرية العامة، أصحاب المعالي والسعادة، السيدات والسادة، يشرفني أن أشارك باسم لبنان في هذا المؤتمر الذي ينعقد مع انطلاقة السنة الخامسة لاتزامنا أهداف التنمية المستدامة، والواقع أن كل يوم يمر علينا يؤكد لنا أن لا خيار أمامنا غير العمل والعمل معاً من أجل تحقيقها لضمان مستقبل أفضل للأرض وجميع سكانها، ولا سيما لشبابها الذين هم المستقبل. وإذا كنا في اليونسكو مكلفين بالهدف الرابع من أهداف التنمية المستدامة، أي التربية فإن اختصاصاتها الأخرى أي العلوم والثقافة مترابطة أيضاً بكل هذه الأهداف. فهل من يعتبر مثلاً أنه يمكن التصدي لمشاكل المناخ والمحيطات والطاقة النظيفة والمياه الصحية من دون العمل على تطوير العلوم؟ وهل من يشكك بدور الثقافة في التنمية من الحفاظ على التراث المادي وغير المادي إلى الذكاء الاصطناعي واقتصادات المعرفة والابتكار؟ وإذ أؤكد دعم لبنان الثابت لليونسكو منذ تأسيسها، لا بد من الإشادة بجهود الأمانة العامة لوضع التربية في قلب النقاش الدولي وفي أولويات السياسات الوطنية انطلاقاً من أن التعليم هو أكبر استثمار في المستقبل. ولا بد من التنويه بالعمل على إنشاء أداة لوضع المعايير الأخلاقية للذكاء الاصطناعي وكذلك بمبادرة العلوم المفتوحة. ولا يغيب عنا تأكيد أهمية مواصلة المساعي الهادفة إلى صون حرية التعبير والدفاع عن سلامة الصحافيين.

٤٢-٢ السيدات والسادة، يدرك لبنان الحاجة الماسة لتحديث التربية ومفهوم التعلم والتعليم بما يواجه تحديات الثورة الرقمية ويولي طموحات الأجيال الناشئة، وهو يعمل مع اليونسكو في مبادرة إعادة النظر في التربية والتعليم، ويستعد معها أيضاً لإطلاق مشروع ريادي لإدخال برمجة الكمبيوتر إلى المدارس الرسمية. وفي الوقت نفسه، يواصل تطبيق استراتيجيته الوطنية لمكافحة التطرف العنيف، ويسعى إلى دمج قيم التسامح وقبول الآخر في المناهج المدرسية، ويعمل على نشر مفاهيم ومبادئ المواطنة العالمية، كما يعمل على توسيع نطاق البحث العلمي ونشر المعرفة العلمية للعموم مع التركيز على الشباب وعلى تمكين المرأة في هذا المجال.

٤٢-٣ وكذلك يهتم لبنان تأكيد أنه يضع الثقافة في أولوياته الوطنية، ويسعى من خلال خطته للنهوض الثقافي إلى جعلها عنصراً مؤثراً بل محركاً حقيقياً في عملية التنمية المستدامة ليصير الإبداع مصدر جذب للاستثمارات وللتنمية في المدن والأرياف. وليس مصادفة أن تكون بيروت قلب لبنان الذي ينبض ثقافة اختيرت قبل أيام مدينة مبدعة للأدب، فلبنان يبقى في تنوعه وتعدد رسالته ثقافية مبنية على الحوار والانفتاح. ومن هنا كانت مبادرة لبنان إلى إنشاء أكاديمية الإنسان للتلاقي والحوار التي رحبت بها الجمعية العامة للأمم المتحدة في أيلول/سبتمبر الماضي. ولبنان الملتزم بحماية الممتلكات الثقافية لا ينفك يجتهد بعمليات تهريب آثار عبر أراضيه وهو يفخر أنه تمكن في السنوات الأخيرة من إعادة مئات القطع المسروقة والمنهوبة خصوصاً لكل من العراق وسورية. كما أنه نجح في استعادة قطع أثرية نادرة سرت منه إبان الحرب في ثمانينات القرن الماضي. ويشرف هنا أن أعلن أن مجلس النواب اللبناني أجاز أخيراً الانضمام إلى البروتوكول الثاني لاتفاقية لاهاي الخاصة بحماية الممتلكات الثقافية في حالة نزاع مسلح.

٤٢-٤ السيدات والسادة، إن كل ما تقدم قد لا يشبع فضول الكثيرين منكم لمعرفة حقيقة ما يجري من أحداث في بلادنا منذ نحو شهر. فما ترونه على شاشاتكم أو تقرأون عنه في صحفكم هو في جوهره صوت شباب وشابات، صوت ارتفع مطالباً بالإسماك بزمام مستقبله في تحرك وطني مطلب سلمي، تحرك يجسد قيم الحرية، وإشراك الشباب وتمكين النساء الذي هو في أساس عمل منظماتنا.

٤٢-٥ وختاماً، لا بد من العودة إلى ما كان طرحه لبنان في المجلس التنفيذي أخيراً لجهة ضرورة استعادة اليونسكو لدورها وحضورها الفكري كمختبر ريادي للأفكار، وذلك عبر حوارات حول التحديات والمسائل الكبرى التي تواجه الإنسانية مع كبار مفكري عصرنا وفلاسفته وعلمائه وأدبائه ومبدعيه. ولا حاجة للتذكير بأن سبق لليونسكو أن استضافت العديدين مثلهم، منهم أمثال كلود ليفي تراس وغابرييل غارسيا ماركيز وأمبرتو إيكو وغيرهم. فلنعمل معاً على أن نعيد لليونسكو ألقها الفكري وهي تقترب من بلوغ عامها الخامس والسبعين لتكون الجبهة المتقدمة لحوارات حرة نقدية وبناءة، ولتكون عن حق أيضاً ضمير العالم فهذا هو الموقع الذي تستحقه اليونسكو. وهذا هو الدور الذي يحتاجه العالم ويستحقه من اليونسكو، وشكراً.

43. **The President:**

Thank you your Excellency. Now I'm pleased to invite His Excellency Mr Sankardja Lare Sambiani, Ambassador, Permanent Delegate of Togo.

44.1 **Togo:**

Monsieur le Président de la Conférence générale, Monsieur le Président du Conseil exécutif, Madame la Directrice générale, Excellences, Mesdames et Messieurs les ministres, Chefs de délégations, Excellences, Mesdames et Messieurs les ambassadeurs, Honorables délégués, Mesdames et Messieurs. Je me fais l'agréable devoir de vous délivrer le message du Ministre Président de la Commission nationale togolaise pour l'UNESCO. La 40^e session de la Conférence générale, qui ouvre ses assises, me donne l'occasion de vous adresser, au nom du Président de la République et du Gouvernement, les salutations fraternelles du peuple togolais. C'est un honneur et un privilège pour moi de prendre la

parole devant cette auguste assemblée pour vous délivrer le message de paix des plus hautes autorités de mon pays et réaffirmer l'attachement du peuple togolais aux valeurs de l'Organisation. Je voudrais d'abord féliciter Monsieur le Président pour son élection à la tête de la 40^e session de la Conférence générale. Je tiens ensuite à saluer Madame Zohour Alaoui, Présidente sortante, pour sa contribution aux activités de la mission de l'Organisation durant son mandat. Je saisis enfin l'opportunité pour féliciter madame la Directrice générale, Madame Audrey Azoulay, et son équipe, pour le travail réalisé à la tête de l'UNESCO depuis deux ans, marqué par l'élaboration et la mise en œuvre du processus de Transformation stratégique.

44.2 Monsieur le Président, la présente session de la Conférence générale se tient dans un contexte où les défis mondiaux à relever sont multiples, rendant la mission de l'Organisation toujours d'actualité. En effet, le monde est en proie à une recrudescence de la haine, du racisme, de l'intolérance et de l'extrémisme violent. S'agissant du terrorisme, il ne se passe plus une semaine sans que soit signalée une attaque terroriste, particulièrement en Afrique de l'ouest. C'est ainsi qu'un prêtre espagnol ayant longtemps servi dans mon pays a été assassiné en février dernier, à la frontière entre le Burkina Faso et le Togo. Mon pays a été obligé de renforcer sa présence militaire à la frontière nord, avec à la clé, l'arrestation de plusieurs présumés djihadistes. Des propos calamiteux circulent également sur les réseaux sociaux, s'exprimant de différentes manières, et parfois à travers les discours des dirigeants politiques.

44.3 À ces phénomènes extrêmes, s'ajoutent des anomalies climatiques qui ne cessent de prendre de l'ampleur ces derniers temps. On se souvient du cyclone violent, d'une intensité rare, survenu en avril dernier en Afrique australe, occasionnant des pertes en vies humaines et jetant des milliers de personnes dans la misère. Le mois de juillet 2019 a été marqué aussi par une canicule exceptionnelle en Europe. Voilà des défis non épuisants auxquels se heurtent aujourd'hui les sociétés humaines et qui constituent des obstacles à la paix mondiale. Il faut que cela change. Dans la recherche des solutions, il y a lieu de changer de paradigmes et la nécessité d'adopter une approche inclusive, multilatéraliste.

44.4 Monsieur le Président, face à ces défis, mon pays soutient le processus de Transformation stratégique en cours à l'UNESCO, en vue de s'adapter efficacement aux changements mondiaux de plus en plus rapides et complexes, en améliorant les moyens d'action et renforçant et ajustant le contenu des programmes. L'UNESCO doit donc être au centre d'un échange mondial d'idées et de recherches de solutions aux défis du XXI^e siècle pour construire un avenir plus humain. Elle doit continuer à soutenir les États membres en développement et les petits États insulaires en développement dans la mise en œuvre des ODD.

44.5 Il y a lieu de maintenir et de consolider, par ailleurs, le programme d'éducation en vue de développement durable, celui d'éducation à la citoyenneté mondiale et enfin la politique de la jeunesse qui met l'accent sur l'engagement civique et citoyen des jeunes pour un changement social positif. En sciences, l'UNESCO doit servir de plateforme à l'affirmation de l'intelligence artificielle et veiller à ses applications en respectant l'éthique et la dignité humaine. C'est pourquoi mon pays suggère que tous ces programmes soient réaffirmés dans le prochain document C/4, Stratégie à moyen terme, dont la collecte des données et la consultation commenceront l'année prochaine pour son élaboration.

44.6 Mon pays suit les changements profonds qui se produisent dans de nombreux secteurs et s'adapte au rythme de tels changements en obtenant des résultats significatifs au profit de la population. Toutefois, ce qui est rempli grâce aux efforts importants doit être amélioré. Ainsi, le Plan national de développement (PND) officiellement lancé par le Président de la République le 4 mars 2019, permettra de faire face aux défis qui se présentent. C'est un document stratégique de lutte contre la pauvreté, de lutte contre les inégalités basées sur le genre, et de création d'emplois pour les jeunes. Il fait de l'éducation et de la formation professionnelle un levier pour le développement du pays.

44.7 Je voudrais exprimer ma gratitude à Madame la Directrice générale pour la bienveillante attention accordée à nos requêtes pendant le premier exercice de ce biennium et le projet de l'UNESCO/Chine pour le renforcement des capacités des enseignants par les technologies de l'information et de la communication (TIC). Ces requêtes approuvées ont permis de donner plus de visibilité aux actions de l'UNESCO dans mon pays. Je me félicite du fait que dans la perspective d'une ouverture de l'enseignement supérieur togolais sur le monde universitaire international, Son Excellence Monsieur le Président de la République ait procédé à la ratification de la Convention révisée sur la Reconnaissance des études et des certificats, diplômes, grades et autres titres de l'enseignement supérieur dans les États d'Afrique, adoptée à Addis-Abeba, le 12 décembre 2014. Monsieur le Président, en terminant mon propos, je voudrais vous assurer de l'appui de mon pays au projet de programme et de budget, second exercice biennal 2020-2021. Je vous remercie.

Visit of H.E. Fra' Giacomo Dalla Torre del Tempio di Sanguinetto, Grand Master of the Sovereign Order of Malta

45. The President:

Thank you Excellency. Honorable delegates, ladies and gentlemen, we are honoured to receive today His Most Imminent Highness Fra' Giacomo Dalla Torre del Tempio di Sanguinetto, Grand Master of the Sovereign Order of Malta. His Most Imminent Highness was elected on 2 May 2018 as 80th Grand Master of the Sovereign Order of Malta for life. Specialized in Christian archeology, and history of arts, His Most Imminent Highness held academic posts at the Pontifical Urbaniana Institute, teaching classical Greek. His Most Imminent Highness was also Chief Librarian and archivist for the Institute's important collections, and he has published a range of essays and articles on aspects of medieval art history. He became a member of the Sovereign Order in 1985 and took his solemn vows in 1993. Yaoundé University awarded him a *laurea honoris causa* in Classics and Philosophy on July 2018. Your Most Imminent Highness, we are honoured by your presence and are looking forward to hearing your message today. The floor is yours.

Mr Cengizer resumes the Chair

46.1 Fra' Giacomo Dalla Torre del Tempio di Sanguinetto (Grand Master of the Sovereign Order of Malta):

Monsieur le Président de la Conférence générale, Madame la Directrice générale de l'UNESCO, Excellences, Mesdames et Messieurs, c'est pour moi une joie aujourd'hui de m'adresser à cette illustre assemblée, 100 ans après la création de celle qui fut l'ancêtre de l'UNESCO, l'Union académique internationale. Permettez-moi maintenant de continuer dans ma langue maternelle, l'italien.

(L'orateur poursuit en italien ; texte en français fourni par la délégation)

46.2 L'action inlassable de l'UNESCO en faveur de l'éducation, de la science et de la culture est une contribution précieuse à la paix et au dialogue entre les peuples, au progrès de l'humanité et au respect de la dignité humaine. En particulier, l'éducation est un droit fondamental – comme vous, Madame la Directrice générale, vous l'avez rappelé dans votre discours lors de la 74^e session de l'Assemblée générale des Nations Unies à New York – et elle est l'instrument essentiel pour réduire les inégalités de genre et pour rendre nos sociétés plus justes et prospères.

46.3 L'action de l'UNESCO mérite d'autant plus notre appréciation, notre gratitude et nos encouragements que nous sommes entourés de conflits et de situations de crise graves qui semblent ne pas trouver d'issue. À cela s'ajoutent un réchauffement climatique alarmant, qui menace de devenir catastrophique, et la migration de millions d'êtres humains fuyant la persécution, la famine, la haine raciale et religieuse ou en quête de meilleures conditions de vie. Dans cette situation humanitaire dramatique l'Ordre de Malte reste fidèle à sa vocation et à sa mission de témoigner la foi et de servir les pauvres et les malades, mission exercée depuis sa fondation à Jérusalem au onzième siècle. Notre action dans les pays les plus démunis, sur le plan humanitaire, est fortement menacée par la sécheresse qui soustrait aux hommes le bien le plus indispensable : c'est à dire l'eau. Un rapport récent des Nations Unies parle de deux cents millions d'êtres humains en risque.

46.4 Nombreuses ont été nos interventions d'urgence dans ce domaine suite à l'intensification des catastrophes naturelles de toutes sortes. L'Ordre de Malte a aussi participé à des opérations de pacification des Nations Unies en fournissant son aide médicale dans plusieurs pays. L'Ordre Souverain de Malte est une institution neutre qui ne poursuit aucun intérêt politique ou économique. Sujet de droit international il entretient des relations diplomatiques avec cent neuf (109) États et avec l'Union Européenne, et jouit d'un statut d'observateur permanent auprès des Nations Unies et ses agences spécialisées. Son réseau d'Ambassades est au service de la diplomatie et de l'action humanitaire.

46.5 L'Ordre de Malte est présent sur la scène internationale avec ses treize mille membres, ses quatre-vingt mille bénévoles permanents et l'engagement de quarante-deux mille médecins et paramédicaux. Il mène des projets médicaux, sociaux et humanitaires sans distinction d'origine ethnique ou de religion dans cent vingt (120) pays et dans des zones de crise, de catastrophes naturelles, de situations de détresse et de marginalisation. L'Ordre de Malte est attentif aux nouvelles formes d'urgence humanitaire, telles que l'accueil et l'intégration des réfugiés et des migrants, la lutte contre la traite des êtres humains, en particulier des femmes et des enfants, et le trafic honteux des organes. A cet égard je voudrais rappeler la Conférence organisée le 8 octobre dernier à Paris auprès de l'IFRI par l'Ordre de Malte sur le thème de la prévention de la traite des femmes. Un de nos projets réalisé au Nigeria pour leur prise en charge a été présenté à cette occasion.

46.6 Les nouvelles formes d'exclusion, en particulier les handicaps, la marginalisation, la solitude, les maladies rares, le '*digital divide*' sont autant d'urgences humanitaires dans les sociétés contemporaines. L'Ordre de Malte a entamé un programme d'action sur ce grave problème sur la base de son expérience et de ses propres capacités. L'Ordre de Malte s'engage également à renforcer le dialogue interculturel et interreligieux sur la base des valeurs de solidarité, d'écoute et d'enrichissement réciproques et de compassion qui sont partagées par toutes les religions.

46.7 Le rôle que les Institutions à base religieuse peuvent jouer dans l'action humanitaire à l'égard des populations civiles et l'interaction de la religion avec la diplomatie et les affaires étrangères ont suscité dernièrement un intérêt croissant dans la communauté internationale. Ceci n'est pas surprenant quand on pense que quatre-vingt-quatre pour cent (84%) de la population mondiale appartient à une confession religieuse. J'ai récemment débattu de ce thème avec le Président Steinmeier à l'occasion de ma visite officielle en Allemagne. Il a longuement parlé de l'interaction entre la religion et les affaires internationales qui a fait l'objet de discussions approfondies lors de la Conférence de Lindau organisée par les autorités allemandes au mois d'août dernier.

46.8 Je souhaite maintenant mentionner brièvement les occasions les plus importantes qui ont fait l'objet d'une collaboration entre l'Ordre de Malte et l'UNESCO : La plus importante est la Conférence sur la diplomatie humanitaire et la gestion des crises internationales qui s'est tenue ici à l'UNESCO en 2011 et a réuni plus de deux cents représentants d'États et d'organisations internationales ainsi que des experts de très haut niveau. En 2012 s'est tenu au Palais Berlaymont à Bruxelles un Séminaire conjoint entre l'Union Européenne, l'UNESCO et l'Ordre de Malte sur la protection des sites sacrés en Méditerranée. Successivement, toujours en étroite collaboration avec l'UNESCO, nous avons organisé à Chypre le Forum sur la Protection et la Conservation du patrimoine culturel en Méditerranée. Enfin, cette année, l'Ordre a tenu à Naples avec l'UNESCO une Conférence scientifique à l'occasion de la journée mondiale de l'eau.

46.9 Je tiens, Monsieur le Président, à souligner la détermination de l'Ordre Souverain de Malte à continuer et à développer sa collaboration avec votre organisation. Nous avons identifié trois secteurs d'intérêt sur lesquels des contacts sont déjà en cours avec les services compétents de l'UNESCO : Parmi les projets humanitaires de l'Ordre en cours, certains sont consacrés à faciliter l'accès des populations indigentes à l'eau potable. C'est pourquoi nous sommes prêts à partager notre expérience et à collaborer avec l'UNESCO. L'Ordre souhaiterait aussi inscrire ses archives au sein du projet « La Mémoire du Monde » de l'UNESCO. Ces archives constituent une composante incontournable de l'histoire de la Méditerranée du XI au XVIII siècle. Nous sommes prêts à poursuivre l'action déjà entreprise de protection et d'accès aux sites historiques et religieux du monde méditerranéen, de pair avec l'UNESCO.

46.10 Avant de conclure permettez-moi une dernière réflexion. Dans le domaine scientifique, l'homme a atteint des objectifs inimaginables. L'intelligence artificielle constituera un passage culturel historique et révolutionnera la vie, le monde du travail e la société. Nous espérons que le progrès scientifique ira de pair avec un nouvel Humanisme dans lequel l'homme, avec son esprit et sa sagesse, prendra des décisions justes sur ces nouveaux défis et continuera à s'interroger sur les grands thèmes de l'existence. Merci.

47. **The President:**

On behalf of all Member States, I would like to thank His Most Eminent Highness the Grand Master of the Sovereign Order of Malta for his speech. Ladies and gentlemen, thank you very much for sharing your vision and experiences. This morning's debate has been enriching, and I am sure the Director-General and her staff have been taking good note of your comments. For my part, I am very much looking forward to continuing our debate this afternoon. The plenary will reconvene at 3 p.m. sharp. The meeting is adjourned.

The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.