

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

Monday 25 November 2019 at 3 p.m.

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

Report of the Education Commission (ED) (40 C/91)

1. The President:

Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen. I will wait a few more minutes so that you can now take your seats. Your Excellencies, the first item on our agenda for this afternoon is the report of the Education Commission. I would therefore like to give the floor to his Excellency Mr Gbovadeh G. Gbilila, Vice-Chairperson of the Education Commission, who will introduce the report contained in document 40 C/91 on behalf of the Commission. You have the floor, Sir.

2.1 Mr Gbilila (Liberia) (Chairperson of the Education Commission):

Honourable President of the General Conference, Madam Director-General, honourable Ministers, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen, the Education Commission of the 40th session of the General Conference completed its proceedings on 16 November 2019. I have the privilege to submit to you the main conclusions of our three-day discussions, which address 17 agenda items and eight reports. I am pleased to be sharing this information on behalf of the Chairperson Mr Shafqat Mahmood, Federal Minister of Education, Professional Training and National Heritage of Pakistan, who was not able to join us today due to important commitments back home. Please accept his apologies. Let me start by recalling briefly the opening of the Education Commission on 14 November.

2.2 In his opening remarks, the Chairperson reminded us of the urgency of accelerating progress on Sustainable Development Goal 4, and the Education 2030 Agenda, a message echoed by the High-level Political Forum and the United Nations General Assembly this year. The Chairperson also emphasized that the Education 2030 Agenda, albeit ambitious, is achievable. However, this requires political will at the highest level, greater financial investment and effective use of RB sources. Furthermore, the Chairperson expressed a need for greater policy focus on inclusion and equity, informed by better data as well as adequate funding. Distinguished delegates, the decisions taken during the Commission will give direction to UNESCO's work for the years to come.

2.3 Now let us turn to the first debate of the Education Commission relating to the adoption of the Programme and Budget for Education 2020-2021 or the 40 C/5. And in the longer term, by looking at both the next cycle 2022-2025 and at the Medium-Term Strategy for 2022-2029, the Director of the Bureau for Strategic Planning provided an overview of the process of preparing the Medium-Term Strategy. This was followed by remarks of the Assistant Director-General for Education, who introduced all the items, highlighting minor programmatic adjustments in the 40 C/5 compared to previous the biennium. These adjustments will help pave the way for a transition towards a longer-term vision, to be further refined in the Medium-Term Strategy.

2.4 To commence her presentation, Madam Assistant Director-General reflected on the words of the United Nations Secretary-General, who, in his opening speech at the General Conference, described education as a central pillar to achieve the objectives for 2030, and stressed UNESCO's fundamental role in leading, coordinating and monitoring global efforts in this regard. Looking through an equity lens, Madam Assistant Director-General outlined the changing context reflected in global trends, including in mobility, digitization and climate change that are increasingly affecting education today. During her presentation, she underscored four flagship initiatives within the Programme and Budget for Education 2020-2021. This would help accelerate progress towards achieving SDG 4 in light of pressing challenges. These are related to girls in women's education, education for vulnerable migrants, refugees, and internationally and internally displaced persons, higher education as central to innovation and transformation, and finally to UNESCO's new flagship initiatives on the futures of education. Madam Assistant Director-General also reassured Member States that the 40 C/5 will maintain its two strategic axes and its alignment with Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4). In this respect, she highlighted the role of the Capacity Development for Education programme as an example of an operational delivery modality. Twenty-six Member States took the floor during the first debate, and largely supported the Education Sector's vision on the three items and their relevance for Education 2030. They expressed their appreciation for the proposed Programme and Budget, and more specifically, for its thematic focus. The consultative process of the development of the Medium-Term Strategy 2022-2029 was welcomed on several occasions, but recommendations were made to give a stronger voice to the youth in UNESCO's decision-making process, as well as to adopt a multidisciplinary and multi-partnership approach to future action. A number of delegates commended UNESCO for its leading and coordinating role on the Education 2030 Agenda. Particular emphasis was placed on the importance of Africa and gender as key global priorities for the Organization. Inclusion, and in that regard the relevance of the impetus on education and vulnerable migrants, refugees and internally displaced persons, was underscored by several Members. Among the priorities to be reinforced, the focus on teachers, higher education and skills development, including TVET and digital skills, were noted as instrumental for the future of education. In addition, global citizenship education and education for sustainable development were mentioned as vital for the implementation of the Agenda as a whole. Several Member States stressed the importance of stronger data and monitoring SDG 4's progress, enhance the crucial roles of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, the IUS, and the Global Education Monitoring Report. Finally, Madam Assistant Director-General highlighted the resource map mobilization achieved by the Education Sector. She indicated that the Sector is highly decentralized, with thematic areas that require particular expertise and fund mobilization efforts. She also emphasized that strategies are tailored to the needs of Member States. For example, during the biennium 33 field offices were supported in developing specific resource mobilization strategies, adapted to their national and regional contexts, in liaison with the Sector and the Bureau for Strategic Planning. Madam Assistant Director-General also provided clarification on the composition of the International Commission on the Futures of Education, on the intersectoral work undertaken in the field of information, communication technologies and artificial intelligence in education, as well as in media information literacy. The Education

Commission adopted the Programme and Budget for Education for the period 2020-2021, also known as the 40 C/5, based on the \$534.6 million scenario, with amendments in Volume 1, and endorsed the recommendations of the Executive Board pertaining to the narrative text in the Volume 2. The resolutions on the Medium-Term Strategy 2022-2029 and the Programme and Budget 2022-2025 will be examined on 27 November at the Joint Meeting of Commissions.

2.5 Following this adoption, the Education Commission proceeded with the second debate on the Global Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education. The Assistant Director-General for Education described the Convention as transformative, as a transformative tool to ensure the recognition of qualifications across borders, regions and continents in a fair, non-discriminatory and transparent manner, and as a milestone in UNESCO's efforts to promote inclusion, mobility and international cooperation in higher education. A ratification process at national levels will follow the adoption of the Convention. Thirty-one Member States and three observers took the floor, unanimously supporting UNESCO's efforts and expressing satisfaction for the Global Convention, as well as its inclusive and participatory developmental process. Some countries stated that the Global Convention is a good example of the normative work that UNESCO does and should continue to do, while others noted the complementary nature of the Global Convention with regional conventions, yet remaining challenges such as the need to strengthen national qualification frameworks, developed quality assurance mechanisms and provide capacity development to concerned actors were also mentioned. A few Member States had specific comments regarding the ratification and implementation of the Convention. More specifically, the Vice Minister for Education of Brazil stated that his country needs to further analyse the Convention through broader international consultations in light of national legislation, in order to evaluate the possibility of its future ratification. The representative of Japan supported the adoption of the draft, but mentioned that the text of the Global Convention is not perfect, pointing to Article IX, paragraph 2 regarding the assessment of applications, and urged the Intergovernmental Conference of the States Parties once established to elaborate a subsidiary text which could serve to better interpret the Convention. In addition, the representative of Portugal stressed the importance of the Global Convention while not forgetting that student mobility must take place in several directions, without contributing to the flight or brain drain of qualified people. He recalled the urgent need for more intense intervention by UNESCO in higher education; highlighting the humanistic values of education, in particular education as a public and universal good, as brought forth by UNESCO's publication *Rethinking Education towards a Global Common Good* (2015). In response, the ADG/ED thanked Member States for their support. She also thanked her own team for facilitating an inclusive and participatory drafting process. Before closing, the Secretary clarified that the editorial points on the text will be taken into consideration in the respective language translations of the Global Convention. Certified copies of the Convention will then be shared with Member States for ratification. Ladies and gentlemen, on 14 November 2019, the Education Commission made history, as it unanimously adopted the Global Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education, making it the first United Nations Treaty on Higher Education with a global scope.

2.6 Now we turn to the third debate, which consisted of four items. The ADG/ED introduced the items under this debate, starting with an overall outlook on Sustainable Development Goal 4; SDG 4, and moving into thematic targets. Now, first, with regard to UNESCO's role in the global and regional coordination of and support for the implementation of SDG 4 Education 2030, the Assistant Director-General summarized major developments over the past two years, and highlighted UNESCO initiated the Multilateral Education Partners platform and the establishment of the Global Coalition for Education Data. The Assistant Director-General assured close coordination of these new initiatives with the SDG Education 2030 Steering Committee. Second, the Assistant Director-General introduced the UNESCO Strategy for Youth and Adult Literacy 2020-2025, which pays special attention to countries with an adult literacy rate below 50%, as well as the E9 countries where the largest number of non-literate adults live. The third item in this debate concerned the framework for the implementation of Education for Sustainable Development Beyond 2019, more commonly known as ESD for 2030, aimed at empowering learners to take action on sustainability issues, including climate action. The fourth and final was the item on the Earth's Charter's contribution to UNESCO's activities on ESD, which reaffirms the importance of the Charter in the implementation of ESD. Twenty-eight Member States and six Observers took the floor, largely expressing appreciation for UNESCO's role in leading global coordination efforts on the Education 2030 Agenda, including through regional consultations and the 2018 Global Education meeting. Several Member States highlighted the crucial role played by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS), and the Global Education Monitoring Report in the respecting leading roles on monitoring progress of the Education 2030 Agenda, and called for increased capacity-building work for data collection and analysis, as well as ensuring harmonization of monetary frameworks. Several Member States also called for strengthening leadership and coordination in terms of developing solid linkages between different initiatives, clarifying roles and responsibilities of key education stakeholders, avoiding duplication, as well as strengthening impact and coherence at country level. There was a call to strengthen the impact of the SDG –Education 2030 Steering Committee, and for the establishment of a core SDG 4 coordination mechanism in Africa. There was also a call for the Organization to strengthen its intellectual leadership role by reinforcing its education, research and foresight function. Moreover, Member States expressed their strong support for the new UNESCO Strategy for Youth and Adult Literacy for 2020-2025, recognizing its centrality for the promotion of quality and inclusive education, and offering lifelong learning opportunities for all. For the implementation of the Strategy, the universality of the literacy agenda and the critical importance of multilingualism, including mother-tongue, language-based approaches to literacy development, were recalled. Member States invited the Secretariat to promote good practice and facilitate the exchange of ideas on literacy. The Russian Federation in particular inquired about an accountability and resource matrix which the Secretariat is developing, stressing the need for an outcome-oriented approach. Member States welcomed the ESD for 2030 framework, emphasizing that the ESD is a key enabler for all Sustainable Development Goals. A number of delegates emphasized the need to closely coordinate the ESD for 2013 mechanism, implementation and Sustainable Development Goal 4 implementation mechanisms. Some highlighted the role of UNESCO to build capacities of relevant stakeholders in the view of current risk and disasters, such as prevention of flooding and other natural disasters. Following a fruitful discussion, the Education Commission adopted the first three resolutions in this debate with minor amendments. The item on the contribution of the Earth Charter to UNESCO activities concerning ESD was adopted without amendments.

2.7 Ladies and gentlemen, we now turn to the fourth debate, which focuses on UNESCO's normative instruments. These concerned the consolidated reports on the implementation of the 2015 Recommendation on Adult Learning in Education, the 2015 Recommendation concerning Technical and Vocational Education and Training, and the 1993 Recommendation on the Recognition of Studies and Qualifications in Higher Education, as well as the proposal by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (IUS) to develop the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) for teacher training programmes. The ADG/ED introduced these items, highlighting that the reports were prepared based on consultation with Member States and considered by the Executive Board. The Assistant Director-General noted that new measures had been taken by the Member States to implement these recommendations and that such are being reflected in national legislation, policies and strategies. Twenty-two Member States and one Observer took the floor, generally voicing support for UNESCO's normative role and welcoming efforts to reinforce the monitoring of its standard-setting instruments. Member States also expressed their satisfaction with the consultation process, noting the generally high response rates. The Education Commission observed that monitoring the implementation of normative instruments should be pursued, as it helps identify areas where greater attention is required. Several Member States did note, however, that adequate financing of adult learning and education, as well as technical and vocational education and training (TVET) remains a challenge. One Member State encouraged others to see TVET as a gateway to green industries and corporate social responsibility for green human capital. Still, Member States pointed to the need for stronger links between education systems and the labour markets to improve insertion rates in different sectors of the economy. During the examination of the resolutions, the representative from Angola voiced strong support for the Global Convention and the reports, recognizing that they will facilitate comparability with and the recognition of studies, as well as promote intercontinental mobility. The honourable delegate of Angola pointed to the need for carefully considering country-specific contexts, improving cooperation and supporting good governance, and for strengthening the links to the overall Sustainable Development Goals in Education 2030 Agenda. As for the proposal on the new ISCED classification for teacher training programmes, several Member States are ready to support achievements in monitoring the quality of the teacher profession, but urged the UIS to build on existing tools and standards. One Member State noted that, given the low reporting rates of teacher-related statistics, perhaps the priority should be to improve the reporting commitment before beginning new data-collection efforts. Others expressed reservations in reducing the analysis of teacher training systems and programmes to data and numbers, which according to them could lead to misinterpretation of priorities of teacher training-related aspects. The Assistant Director-General thanked Member States for their support and interventions. The UIS Director also clarified that no duplication of efforts or additional data would be collected, and that the classification would take full advantage of existing data already provided to Member States. The UIS Director further confirmed that the feasibility of new frameworks has been endorsed by Member States in the context of the Technical Cooperation Group on the indicators for SDG 4 and Education 2030. The draft resolution pertaining to the recommendations on adult learning and TVET were adopted as proposed. The ones related to the recommendation on higher education and to the classification of teacher training programmes were adopted with minor amendments. Following debate 4, the Education Commission adopted with consensus the item concerning educational and cultural institutions in the Occupied Arab Territories, and I wish to congratulate everyone involved. Finally, three category 2 centres were established under the auspices of UNESCO in Ghana on education, planning and administration, in France on climate education, and in the Seychelles on education and early childhood education. The Commission also proclaimed the first International Day against Violence and Bullying at School, including Cyberbullying, to draw the attention of the global community to this phenomenon and to combat it.

2.8 Now we come to this fifth and final debate on the future of the International Bureau of Education and on the management of the education-related category 1 institutes. The Assistant Director-General for Education provided the background of the proposal submitted to the General Conference on the Future of the International Bureau of Education (IBE), recalling the three options that were considered during the biennium. The Assistant Director-General further outlined the roadmap for the reorganization of the IBE in Geneva, and clarified that the Education Commission would need to examine and adopt the resolution concerning the IBE within the Programme and Budget for 2020-2021. The Assistant Director-General also explained the efforts made by the Secretariat in strengthening the category 1 institutes, including on programme management and coordination, financially in budget management, human resource management and on harmonizing the Institute's Statutes. During this debate, 10 Member States took the floor; several expressed support for maintaining the IBE in Geneva with a renewed mandate, while requesting the Secretariat to present a proposal on strengthening UNESCO's curriculum activities to the Executive Board next spring. Some Member States expressed their concern that there would no longer be resources for curriculum development if the new mandate of IBE did not cover this thematic focus. Notably, China argued that the IBE should continue to have a strong focus on curriculum, given the needs of Member States in this critical area. In an effort to reach consensus in paragraph 2 of the draft resolution, Switzerland accepted to include a reference to curriculum for the new mandate of the IBE, while having preferred to keep this broader in order to avoid overlap with the work on strengthening curriculum activities at UNESCO mentioned in paragraph 3. Switzerland also expressed its satisfaction that the Education Commission had reaffirmed the reorganization of the IBE in Geneva with a new mandate comprising curricular elements. Kenya requested clarification on the term "at UNESCO" in paragraph three of the draft resolution, which regards the consolidated report by the Director-General to be submitted to the Executive Board for strengthening curriculum activities at UNESCO. The Assistant Director-General clarified that the term "at UNESCO" made reference to the entire Organization and not only its Headquarters. Following initial concerns from the Member States in delegating the authority to the Executive Board on matters concerning the future of the IBE, it was agreed to do so provisionally, following assurances that it would not affect budgetary aspects, in view of the final decision at the 41st session of the General Conference. One Member State questioned whether the timeline was realistic and several noted the urgency of studying the review and reorganization process. The Assistant Director-General took note of the comments and provided clarification on the options for reorganization of the Institute, as well as the two-track process of, on the one hand, defining a mandate for the IBE, and on the other hand of preparing a consolidated proposal regarding UNESCO's work on curriculum. In the end, a revised resolution, which was proposed following a discussion by an informal working group of Member States, was adopted with some amendments. With regard to the education-related

category 1 institutes, the Education Commission took note of the Director-General's report on improving the management and adapted slightly revised Statutes for five of them.

2.9 Before closing the Education Commission, the Chairpersons of the Governing Boards of eight education-related UNESCO category 1 institutes or their representatives presented reports on the activities carried out during the last biennium, namely UNESCO's International Bureau of Education (IBE); UNESCO's International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP); the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL); UNESCO's Institute for Information Technologies in Education (IITE), UNESCO's International Institute for Higher Education in Latin America and the Caribbean (IESALC), UNESCO's International Institute for Capacity Building in Africa (IICBA), UNESCO's Mahatma Gandhi Institute of Education for Peace and Sustainable Development (MGIEP), and UNESCO's Institute for Statistics (UIS). The Assistant Director-General for Education thanked the institutes' host countries for their valuable contributions.

2.10 Distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen, allow me to conclude my presentation with some comments and some reflections. Congratulations to all of us for adopting important decisions that would chart the way for UNESCO's work in education and support us in implementing SDG 4. We have endorsed our programme, adopted a Global Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education, a new Strategy for Youth and Adult Literacy, a Framework on Education for Sustainable Development for 2030 and more. Before closing this Commission, I wish to express gratitude to the Chair of the Commission, Mr Shafqat Mahmood, Federal Minister of Education, Professional Training and Heritage of Pakistan; my Co-Vice Chair, Ms Fawziya Al Khater, Madam Under-Secretary-General of the Ministry of Education of Qatar for her support and the Rapporteur Ms Kasan Troupe from Jamaica. I would also like to extend my thanks to the representatives of the Director-General, particularly the Assistant Director-General for Education, Ms Stefania Giannini, and the Directors of UNESCO's category 1 institutes for their pertinent explanations and clarifications, as well as the respective Chairpersons of their Governing Boards for their invaluable inputs and updates.

2.11 I would like to conclude my presentation by echoing the words of our Chair: Education is the most powerful tool we have to build peace in the minds of boys and girls, women and men, and to transform our world. We count on your support to defend education, protect it, not only for today, but for many possible pathways for education for future generations to come. UNESCO called for a strong focus on youth at the 40th session of its General Conference, as youth are central to our discussion today. After all, we are debating their future. We need to ensure that we see greater and more meaningful engagements with youth, youth representations and youth-led Organizations. The bright solutions which our world so desperately needs lie in the minds of our bright youth. We need to increase our efforts to incorporate youth into our decision-making processes so that they have a seat at the table right beside ours. Finally, let us thank the Legal Advisers, the Secretariat of the Education Commission, as well as all the teams involved in the Organization of the General Conference. Thank you.

3.1 **The President:**

Thank you, your Excellency for your excellent, very informative report. Thank you indeed. Are there any comments or suggestions on this report? Then, as you know, the Report of the Education Commission contains item **8.1** "Final Progress Report and Draft Text of the Global Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education". The ED Commission recommended the adoption of the Global Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education as contained in Annex II of document 40 C/31. According to Rule 84.1 (c) of the Rules of Procedure of the General Conference, international conventions should be adopted by a two-thirds majority. May I take it that the General Conference adopts the convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education as contained in Annex II of document 40 C/31? I see no objections.

3.2 *It is so **decided**.*

3.3 Yes, indeed this is a breakthrough. May I then consider that the General Conference takes note of the report of the Education Commission and hereby adopts the draft resolutions proposed in document 40 C/91, subject to the decisions that the General Conference may take when adopting the Appropriation Resolution for 2020-2021? Thank you.

3.4 *It is so **decided**.*

3.5 I wish to congratulate all the members of the Education Commission, and you, Sir, yourself, and Mr Shafqat Mahmood. Congratulations for the good work.

Report of the Communication and Information Commission (CI) (40 C/95)

4. **The President:**

Your Excellencies, we now turn to the report of the Communication and Information (CI) Commission. I would therefore like to give the floor to his Excellency Mr Christian Ter-Stepanian, Ambassador of Armenia and Chairperson of the CI Commission, who will introduce the report contained in document 40 C//95 on behalf of the Commission. You have the floor, Sir.

5.1 **M. Ter-Stepanian** (Arménie) (Président de la Commission communication et information) :

Monsieur le Président de la Conférence générale, Monsieur le Président du Conseil exécutif, Madame la Directrice générale, distingués Délégués, Mesdames et Messieurs. Au nom de la Commission communication et information, c'est pour moi un grand honneur de présenter le rapport de la Commission, qui figure dans le document 40 C/95.

5.2 La Commission communication et information s'est réunie pendant deux jours afin d'examiner les 11 points figurants à son ordre du jour, qui ont été répartis sur quatre séances. Par ailleurs, trois événements parallèles à la réunion de la Commission ont été organisés le 18 novembre 2019.

5.3 Les rapports des conseils intergouvernementaux des deux programmes du Secteur CI ont été présentés devant la Commission qui en a pris note. La Présidente du Conseil international pour le développement de la communication (PIDC) a fait part des résultats positifs du programme et des progrès accomplis. Puis, la Présidente du Conseil du Programme information pour tous (PIPT) a présenté l'établissement de nouvelles collaborations dans le cadre du programme, et la mise en œuvre de projets récemment menés sur l'intersection de la technologie et de la société.

5.4 La Commission est ensuite passé à l'examen du point 4.2 « Examen et adoption du projet de programme et de budget pour 2020-2021, 40 C/5 », et Titre 2.A, grand programme V, Communication et information. Dans ses remarques liminaires, le représentant de la Directrice générale a constaté que les deux axes d'action et les six résultats escomptés du grand programme V du Projet de 40 C/5 sont identiques à ceux du 39 C/5.

5.5 Les indicateurs de performance ont été adaptés pour mieux refléter le travail du Secteur dans un contexte où les technologies du numérique évoluent rapidement. Les représentants de 31 États membres et un observateur ont pris la parole pendant le débat sur ce point. La majorité des orateurs ont accueilli avec satisfaction le projet de 40 C/5. Ils ont insisté sur l'importance du Programme CI pour atteindre les Objectifs de développement durable. Les orateurs ont également félicité le Secteur pour les résultats accomplis dans ses domaines d'expertise, notamment la liberté d'expression, la sécurité des journalistes, la lutte contre l'impunité, le développement et la liberté des médias, l'accès universel à l'information, ainsi que la préservation et la diffusion du savoir.

5.6 En ce qui concerne le budget, plusieurs Délégués ont accueilli avec satisfaction l'adoption du scénario budgétaire à 534,6 millions de dollars, constatant que celui-ci devrait apporter davantage de ressources pour la mise en œuvre du programme du Secteur dans ses domaines prioritaires.

5.7 Un représentant a fait part à la Commission de sa préoccupation quant à l'insuffisance des ressources allouées au grand programme V et qui devraient être renforcées. Plusieurs représentants se sont félicités des progrès réalisés par les programmes intergouvernementaux PIDC et PIPT. Toutefois, des délégués ont exprimé leur inquiétude à l'égard des perspectives financières des programmes.

5.8 Concernant l'axe d'action 1, il a été réaffirmé que la liberté d'expression et le développement de médias libres, indépendants et pluralistes, devaient continuer à constituer l'un des domaines prioritaires du secteur. Ainsi, nombre de représentants ont souligné l'importance du leadership de l'UNESCO dans la mise en œuvre et le suivi du plan d'action des Nations unies pour la sécurité des journalistes et la question de l'impunité. Deux représentants ont rappelé que la grande majorité des crimes commis contre des journalistes ne sont pas résolus. Un représentant a également mentionné que le nombre de femmes journalistes victimes de crimes a augmenté. D'autres orateurs ont exprimé leur soutien à la promotion de l'égalité des genres dans les médias et un orateur s'est référé à l'importance des médias face aux situations de terrorisme.

5.9 En ce qui concerne l'éducation aux médias et à l'information, de nombreux délégués se sont félicités des initiatives mises en place par le Secteur et du leadership assuré par l'UNESCO sur ce sujet. Reconnaisant les nombreuses possibilités offertes par la technologie et les nouvelles formes de communication pour la construction de sociétés de savoir inclusives, de nombreux États membres ont évoqué l'augmentation de la désinformation et du discours de haine. Plusieurs orateurs ont affirmé que le rôle de l'éducation aux médias et à l'information est cruciale pour renforcer le développement démocratique des sociétés.

5.10 Concernant l'axe d'action 2, plusieurs représentants ont évoqué l'importance de l'accès universel à l'information, ainsi que de sa préservation et sa diffusion. Ils ont aussi exprimé leur inquiétude concernant l'impact de la fracture numérique sur la réalisation des Objectifs de développement durable, que ce soit entre pays développés ou en développement, entre zones urbaines ou rurales, ou encore entre les femmes et les hommes. Ils ont salué les efforts notables déployés en faveur de l'égalité des genres, notamment dans le cadre de l'éducation aux technologies de l'information et de la communication.

5.11 Le travail normatif phare de l'UNESCO dans le domaine de l'intelligence artificielle a également été loué, et son importance soulignée. De nombreux Délégués ont salué l'adoption des indicateurs universels de l'internet. Enfin, plusieurs représentants ont réitéré l'importance et leur soutien au Programme Mémoire du monde pour l'accès et la préservation du savoir et de l'information. À cet égard, un représentant a regretté l'arrêt momentané du registre international de ce programme.

5.12 De manière générale, les représentants ont estimé que le mandat unique du Secteur dans le système des Nations unies était plus essentiel que jamais, et qu'il jouissait à cet égard du plein soutien des États membres. Si la grande majorité des représentants se sont déclarés satisfaits par la présentation du C/5, certains ont toutefois appelé à un investissement accru du Secteur dans le renforcement des capacités des parties prenantes de son mandat.

5.13 Plusieurs Délégués ont informé la Commission des actions menées dans leurs pays en ce qui concerne les domaines se rapportant au Secteur, tels que l'enseignement du journalisme, la formation des juges et des personnels judiciaires, et la sécurité des journalistes. Certains États membres ont rappelé qu'une attention particulière devait être accordée à la lutte contre l'impunité pour les crimes commis contre les journalistes. Deux États membres ont demandé que davantage d'attention soit prêtée aux thèmes visés par l'axe d'action 2.

5.14 Dans son intervention, le représentant de la Directrice générale a répondu aux diverses questions soulevées, notamment concernant les fonds et les comptes spéciaux ainsi que les projets non-financés. Des délégations ont fait valoir les prérogatives des États membres en matière de structure du Secrétariat. Le Conseiller juridique a apporté des clarifications sur ce point, soulignant également les prérogatives de la Directrice générale dans ce domaine et de la Conférence générale en matière d'approbation du budget.

5.15 À la lumière des discussions approfondies, et dans un esprit de consensus, la Commission a recommandé à la Conférence générale d'adopter la résolution proposée au Paragraphe 6000 du Volume I du document 40 C/5 concernant le grand programme V, Communication et information, avec un amendement, ainsi que le plafond budgétaire prévisionnel recommandé la semaine dernière par la réunion conjointe des commissions.

5.16 Mesdames et Messieurs, la Commission a ensuite considéré le point **5.4** relatif à l'établissement à Ljubljana, en Slovénie, d'un centre international de recherche sur l'intelligence artificielle en tant que centre placé sous l'égide de l'UNESCO (catégorie 2), et du projet de résolution y afférent. Après une brève introduction du représentant de la Directrice générale, la Commission a recommandé à la Conférence générale d'adopter cette résolution.

5.17 Mesdames et Messieurs les Délégués, je voudrais maintenant appeler votre attention sur le déroulement de la discussion du point **5.8** consacré au rapport sur la mise en œuvre des résultats du Sommet mondial sur la société de l'information (SMSI) et le rôle de l'UNESCO après 2019. Au cours du débat, les représentants de 20 États membres et un Observateur ont pris la parole. La majorité des Délégués se sont déclarés en faveur du rapport, en prenant acte du rôle positif que l'UNESCO joue dans le cadre du Sommet mondial par sa présence et sa contribution aux activités. Cinq États membres ont demandé que l'on mette davantage l'accent sur l'éthique de l'intelligence artificielle. Un Délégué a demandé que l'UNESCO collabore davantage avec l'Union internationale des télécommunications et avec la Commission sur le haut débit afin d'assurer un accès universel à ces technologies. Un autre a fait observer qu'il fallait donner priorité à l'inclusion des jeunes et aux personnes vulnérables. Cinq Délégués ont mentionné l'importance de l'universalité de l'Internet et des indicateurs développés par l'UNESCO pour un Internet fondé sur les droits humains, ouvert, accessible à tous, et nourri par la participation de multiples acteurs. Le potentiel prometteur de la mise en œuvre de ces indicateurs a été particulièrement souligné. Deux autres ont noté avec satisfaction la transversalité du forum et sa pertinence pour d'autres domaines du Secteur. Deux Délégués ont toutefois exprimé des réserves vis-à-vis du contenu du rapport. Les besoins spécifiques des pays en développement et la question des discours de haine devraient à l'avenir trouver place dans le rapport. La question de la sécurité des données a également été mise en exergue par d'autres intervenants.

5.18 Invitant les États membres et toutes les autres parties prenantes à mettre en œuvre et à développer davantage le concept de l'universalité de l'Internet, la Commission a ensuite recommandé à la Conférence générale d'adopter la résolution telle qu'amendée.

5.19 Le quatrième point examiné par la Commission concerne le point **5.14**, qui traitait de la proclamation d'une « Semaine mondiale de l'éducation aux médias et à l'information ». Le représentant de la Directrice générale a remercié les États membres et a attiré l'attention des Délégués sur les événements portant sur l'éducation aux médias et à l'information ayant lieu en 2019, ainsi que sur les portées positives possibles de la présente résolution. Les représentants de 17 États membres ont pris la parole lors du débat. Ils ont affirmé le rôle essentiel de l'éducation aux médias et à l'information pour faire face aux défis tels que la désinformation, les discours de haine et l'extrémisme violent.

5.20 L'importance de l'éducation aux médias et à l'information a fait l'objet d'un large consensus de la part des États membres. Une majorité d'intervenants a souligné la priorité accordée à l'éducation aux médias et à l'information au niveau national, et plusieurs ont cité des mesures prises pour renforcer la sensibilisation à ce sujet. Certains ont réitéré l'importance du rôle des jeunes et des enseignants. Ils ont aussi souligné la place des institutions du savoir telles que les bibliothèques. À l'issue du débat, la Commission a recommandé à l'unanimité à la Conférence générale d'adopter cette résolution.

5.21 Mesdames et Messieurs, la Commission a ensuite procédé à l'examen du point **9.8** sur le quatrième rapport de synthèse sur l'application par les États membres de la Recommandation de 2003 sur la promotion et l'usage du multilinguisme et l'accès universel au cyberspace. Dans son introduction sur ce point, le Sous-directeur général de la Commission communications et information a souligné l'importance de faciliter l'accès aux réseaux et aux services de l'internet et de développer les contenus et systèmes multilingues, notamment dans le domaine public, tout en promouvant un équilibre entre les intérêts publics et privés. Il a reconnu l'existence de défis importants à relever, y compris dans le domaine de l'intelligence artificielle et de l'accès à internet. Enfin, il a rappelé l'importance de la diversité linguistique dans le mandat de l'UNESCO, qui a poussé à sa prise en compte dans les indicateurs de l'universalité de l'internet qui est déjà mise en œuvre par plus de 10 États membres. La Commission a recommandé à l'unanimité à la Conférence générale d'adopter cette résolution.

5.22 La Commission a repris ses travaux le deuxième jour de la Commission avec l'examen du point **5.26** intitulé « Document final stratégique de l'Année internationale des langues autochtones ». Un représentant de l'Assemblée des premières nations du Canada a fait une allocution inaugurale pour marquer le début des travaux sur ce point, en présence des représentants des peuples autochtones de l'Australie, du Canada, de la Fédération de Russie, de la Norvège et de la Suède.

5.23 Dans son introduction, le représentant de la Directrice générale a évoqué le contexte du document final en rappelant le rôle assigné à l'UNESCO en tant qu'institution principale dans l'observation de l'Année internationale. Il a souligné que le document présenté était le résultat de consultations multilatérales et participatives ainsi que des centaines d'activités réalisées dans le cadre du plan d'action pour l'année. Lors du débat qui a suivi, 12 États membres sont intervenus, dont deux ont cédé la parole à un représentant d'un peuple autochtone. Tous les intervenants ont convenu de l'importance des langues autochtones pour une société de savoir diversifiée et inclusive, en accord avec les identités et histoires plurielles sur lesquelles celle-ci s'édifie. Les délégués ont souligné la nécessité de la documentation, de la préservation, du renforcement et de la revitalisation des langues autochtones, surtout à l'ère du numérique.

5.24 La plupart des Délégués se sont félicités du document final de la consultation multipartite, ainsi que du rôle de chef de file assuré par l'UNESCO dans l'observation de l'année. Plusieurs États membres ont accueilli avec satisfaction la perspective d'une proclamation d'une décennie internationale des langues autochtones qui devrait permettre une continuation des activités entreprises dans le cadre de l'année internationale. Des Délégués ont également formé le vœu

de voir davantage d'initiatives participatives et durables. Comme l'a rappelé un des représentants autochtones à cet égard : « Ne faites rien sur nous sans nous ».

5.25 La Commission a ensuite recommandé à la Conférence générale d'adopter la résolution telle qu'amendée afin de confier au Secteur la coordination du suivi des résultats de l'Année internationale des langues autochtones. À ce propos, le Canada, avec le soutien du Danemark, de l'Estonie, de la Norvège et de la Suède, a souhaité que le Secteur utilise tous les instruments à sa disposition, y compris les programmes intergouvernementaux PIPT et PIDC.

5.26 Mesdames et Messieurs, la Commission a ensuite abordé le point **8.2** « Proposition de projet de recommandation sur les Ressources éducatives libres (REL) ». Dans ses remarques liminaires, le Sous-directeur général a évoqué le travail approfondi et participatif qui a conduit à l'élaboration de cette proposition. Il a rappelé que le projet de recommandation avait déjà été adopté par consensus lors de la réunion intergouvernementale d'experts tenue au Siège de l'UNESCO en mai 2019. Il a aussi souligné que cette recommandation, qui s'appuie sur le plan d'action de Ljubljana sur les Ressources éducatives libres, contribuera à la réalisation de plusieurs Objectifs de développement durable et qu'elle servira à soutenir les États membres à créer des sociétés du savoir inclusives et durables.

5.27 Invitée à s'exprimer, la Sous-directrice générale pour l'éducation a évoqué avec satisfaction la collaboration entre les deux Secteurs sur la question des Ressources éducatives libres. Au cours du débat, les représentants de 18 États membres et le représentant d'une ONG ont pris la parole. La grande majorité des représentants ont exprimé leur soutien au travail intersectoriel de l'Organisation dans le domaine des Ressources éducatives libres, en mettant en évidence son apport à l'ODD 4 visant une éducation de qualité pour tous, notamment par le biais de plateformes numériques.

5.28 De nombreux orateurs ont évoqué leur implication dans les phases de préparation du document et souligné l'importance du développement de politiques nationales pour une mise en œuvre effective de la recommandation. Deux Délégués ont néanmoins tenu à rappeler que la recommandation était non-contraignante. Un Délégué a remarqué que les Ressources éducatives libres faisaient l'objet de différentes interprétations et qu'il fallait davantage considérer les différents besoins et les priorités des États membres concernant ce sujet. Il a aussi souligné l'importance de réduire la fracture numérique. Un représentant s'est interrogé sur la forme que prendrait le suivi de la recommandation. L'Observateur a demandé que les ONG soient incluses dans le processus de mise en œuvre de la recommandation. La Commission a recommandé à l'unanimité à la Conférence générale d'adopter cette résolution.

5.29 La Commission a ensuite examiné le point 9.7 relatif au rapport de synthèse sur l'application par les États membres de la Recommandation concernant la préservation et l'accessibilité du patrimoine documentaire, y compris le patrimoine numérique. Dans son introduction, le représentant de la Directrice générale a souligné l'importance de cette revendication et de son application pour la préservation et l'accès universel au patrimoine documentaire. Il a rappelé que le rapport avait déjà été approuvé par le Comité juridique. Un État membre a pris la parole et a exprimé son soutien au rapport et à la Recommandation. La Commission a décidé de recommander à l'unanimité à la Conférence générale d'adopter cette résolution.

5.30 Le point suivant a concerné le point **5.25** portant sur la révision des Statuts du Conseil intergouvernemental du Programme information pour tous (PIPT). Dans son introduction, le Sous-directeur général a décrit l'objectif et le travail mené pour l'élaboration de la révision des Statuts. En rappelant à l'accord préalable du Comité juridique, il a ensuite invité les États membres à approuver les Statuts révisés. La Commission a recommandé à l'unanimité à la Conférence générale d'adopter cette résolution.

5.31 Pour conclure ses travaux, la Commission a examiné le point **3.1** sur la préparation du projet de stratégie à moyen terme pour 2022-2029, 41/C/4, et le point **2** sur la préparation du projet de programme et de budget pour 2022-2025 (41/C/5). Dans ses remarques liminaires, le représentant de la Directrice générale a partagé avec la Commission la vision et les orientations stratégiques du programme pour les années à venir, notamment en ce qui concerne les Objectifs de développement durable et surtout les domaines de la liberté d'expression, de la sécurité des journalistes, et de l'accès à l'information. Le Directeur du Bureau de la planification stratégique a ensuite présenté aux États membres le processus de préparation des projets exposé dans les documents afférents à ces points. Les représentants de 26 États membres ont pris part à ce débat. Les Délégués ont salué le travail accompli par le Secteur en soulignant son rôle catalyseur et le potentiel intersectoriel du programme. Selon les orateurs, la transversalité du mandat s'est trouvée reflétée dans la contribution du Secteur dans la réalisation de plusieurs ODD, y compris l'ODD 16 sur la paix, la justice et les institutions efficaces, et l'ODD 5 sur l'égalité des genres.

5.32 Plusieurs intervenants ont demandé à ce que l'égalité des genres, qui est une priorité globale pour l'Organisation, soit davantage intégrée dans le travail du Secteur, notamment en ce qui concerne le développement des médias. Se référant aux défis émergents en matière de développement durable, et en vue des évolutions technologiques et numériques, les orateurs ont rappelé l'importante contribution du secteur à la promotion d'une approche fondée sur les droits humains et sur les principes d'égalité. Certains domaines ont été particulièrement mis en exergue, tels que l'accès à l'information, et sa préservation, la liberté d'expression et la sécurité des journalistes.

5.33 Le Plan d'action de l'ONU sur la sécurité des journalistes, et en particulier la sécurité des femmes journalistes, a été souligné à cet égard. Les autres domaines qui ont aussi été mis en lumière sont l'éducation aux médias et à l'information, le multilinguisme, y compris les langues autochtones, et enfin les technologies émergentes et l'intelligence artificielle, ainsi que ses implications éthiques.

5.34 L'apport des programmes intergouvernementaux au mandat du Secteur a été mentionné par plusieurs Délégués qui ont demandé qu'un soutien accru soit accordé à ses organes. Certains ont souhaité que le secteur se penche davantage sur le renforcement des capacités des États membres dans ses activités. Les orateurs ont également mentionné que d'autres domaines, tels que la jeunesse, l'Afrique, la fracture numérique, les petits États insulaires en

développement, changements climatiques, et la collaboration internationale, y compris au sein des Nations unies, mériteraient davantage d'attention.

5.35 Monsieur le Président de la Conférence générale, Monsieur le Président du Conseil exécutif, Madame la Directrice générale de l'UNESCO, Mesdames et Messieurs les Délégués, Excellences, je souhaite remercier les représentants des États membres qui ont participé aux travaux de la Commission. Leur engagement et leurs contributions précieuses aux débats nous ont permis d'honorer les tâches qui nous avaient été confiées par la Conférence générale dans un esprit de coopération et de dialogue constructif.

5.36 Je souhaite aussi vous remercier, Monsieur le Président, ainsi que les membres du Bureau de la Conférence générale, pour le soutien apporté aux travaux de la Commission. J'adresse également mes sincères remerciements au Bureau de la Commission, aux Vice-présidents, Madame Elaine Ayotte du Canada, Monsieur Roberto Ramirez Aldana du Honduras, Madame Ahn Eunju de la République de Corée, Madame Elisabeth Sarkodie-Mensah du Ghana, ainsi qu'à la Rapporteur, Madame Ilham Berrada du Maroc.

5.37 Avant de conclure, permettez-moi d'exprimer ma sincère gratitude à Madame la Directrice générale et à son représentant Monsieur Moez Chakchouk, Sous-directeur général pour la communication et l'information, pour ses interventions réfléchies, son soutien et son engagement. Je remercie également la Secrétaire de la Commission, Madame Mirta Lourenço et toute son équipe pour avoir mis leurs compétences et leur expérience à ma disposition et pour m'avoir accompagné dans cette mission. Mes remerciements vont enfin aux interprètes, aux commissaires, au personnel de sécurité, au personnel technique, aux hôtes, aux hôtesse et aux stagiaires qui ont tous contribué au succès des travaux de notre Commission.

5.38 Mesdames et Messieurs, l'UNESCO se trouve confrontée, se trouve face à des sociétés en pleine transformation dans lesquelles les défis sont aussi nombreux que les opportunités. À l'ère du numérique et de l'information, l'importance de l'ensemble du Secteur CI et de son travail doit être mise en valeur. C'est pourquoi les discussions que nous avons entamées ici durant cette 40^e session de la Conférence générale de l'UNESCO sont prometteuses et porteuses d'une volonté de coopérer en vue d'assurer la réalisation des objectifs communs, fruits de notre collaboration.

5.39 C'était pour moi un honneur de vous restituer aujourd'hui les débats que nous avons eus durant la Commission communication et information. Je crois en avoir retenu l'essentiel. J'ai été animé par une démarche inclusive, et me suis efforcé dans cet exercice de prendre en compte toutes les contributions. Ces travaux ont démontré la vigueur et la pertinence du Secteur, la confiance dont il bénéficie auprès des États membres et la force qu'il possède dans l'exécution de son mandat.

5.40 Mesdames et Messieurs, pour clore mon propos, je souhaite exprimer ma conviction de la nécessité d'un engagement toujours plus soutenu à œuvrer à la création de sociétés inclusives et durables, fondées sur les droits humains et respectueuses de la liberté d'expression, et à contribuer ainsi à la réalisation de la mission de notre Organisation. Certes, il nous reste beaucoup à faire. Méditons sur cette citation du grand Nelson Mandela : « Après avoir gravi une longue colline, tout ce que l'on découvre c'est qu'il y en a encore beaucoup d'autres à gravir. Mais l'important est que notre détermination demeure intacte ». Je vous remercie pour votre attention.

6.1 **The President:**

Thank you your Excellency Mr Ter-Stepanian for a very complete and enlightening report of the CI Commission. May I then consider that the General Conference takes note of the Report of the CI Commission and hereby adopts the draft resolutions proposed in document 40 C//95, subject to the decisions that the General Conference may take when adopting the Appropriation Resolution for 2020-2021? Thank you.

6.2 *It is so **decided**.*

6.3 I wish to congratulate heartily the Chairperson and also all the members of the CI Commission for their work. Thank you.

Report of the Natural Sciences Commission (SC) (40 C/92)

7. **The President:**

Your Excellencies, we now turn to the report of the Science Commission. I should therefore like to give the floor to his Excellency Mr Stephen Simukanga, Chairperson of the SC Commission, who will introduce the report contained in document 40 C/92 on behalf of the Commission. Excellency you have the floor.

8.1 **Mr Simukanga (Zambia) (Chairperson of the Science Commission):**

Thank you, Mr President. Mr President of the General Conference, Madam Director-General, honourable ministers present, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen, Mr President, before I go to the report, I just want to confess one or two things. First of all, I must confess that I have been on fast-forward in terms of learning some UNESCO terminologies, and three of them stand out for me. For example, 40 C/Corr., then you have 40 C/Rev. and 40 C/Add. The "Corr." from what I understand is that you have made corrections to the agenda item; the "Rev." that you have made some revisions, the "Add." that you have made some additions. So I was struggling to understand what all these mean until this afternoon when it was explained to me. So I will go out with a rich vocabulary from UNESCO, Mr President. I also learned what it means to remove a square bracket from some text. Sometimes you can spend hours debating about the square brackets; that's another take home for me. The last one is that of when you are having a debate at UNESCO you are not sure of the outcome. And that is what makes it exciting. Where I am coming from, from academia, sometimes you know the outcome before you start the meeting, but you spend two hours debating to confirm your outcome. But at UNESCO that is not it, so I have got three take-homes, Mr President. Now back to the reports.

8.2 Mr President, it is an honour and a privilege for me to present to you the main conclusions of our deliberations on the nine agenda items related to a Major Programme II – Natural Sciences and the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) entrusted to the Science Commission. After two days and four meetings of inspiring and insightful discussions, the Science Commission of the 40th session of the General Conference completed its work on 19 November. At its first meeting, the Science Commission examined six agenda items, the first of which was item **5.4** on the establishment of category two institutes and centres under the auspices of UNESCO. Without exception, the Science Commission welcomed the five proposals for new category, two centres contained in document 40 C/18, Parts V to IX, and it decided therefore to recommend to the General Conference that it approves the establishment as category 2 centres under the auspices of UNESCO, namely the Regional Education and Research Centre on Earthquake Risk Management and Resilience for West and Central Asia at the International Institute of Earthquake Engineering and Seismology (IIEES) in Tehran, the Islamic Republic of Iran. The second one was the Global Research and Training Centre for International Designated Areas (GCIDA) in Jeju Island, Republic of Korea. The third was the International Centre for Interdisciplinary Research on Water System Dynamics (ICIReWaRD) in Montpellier, France. The fourth one was the Regional Experimental Centre for Sanitation Technologies (CERTS) in Canelones, Uruguay, and the fifth the International Centre for Capacity Development – Sustainable Use of Natural Resources and Societal Change in Reykjavik, Iceland.

8.3 The Science Commission then addressed favourably item **5.13** “Proclamation of an International Day of Mathematics”. It recommended to the General Conference that it adopt the resolution proposed in paragraph 11 of document 40 C/27, as amended by the Commission, whereby the General Conference decides to proclaim 14 March every year as the International Day of Mathematics, a day that, according to the amendment, could provide UNESCO with opportunities also to launch innovative projects to strengthen capacities in mathematics in developing countries. Thereafter, the Science Commission turned to item **5.21** “Proclamation of a World Engineering Day for Sustainable Development”, which was also favourably received. The Science Commission therefore recommended to the General Conference that it adopt the resolution proposed in paragraph 9 of document 40 C/64 as amended by the Commission, whereby the General Conference proclaims 4 March of every year as the World Engineering Day for Sustainable Development. The amendment reflected the importance of interdisciplinary science for sustainable development.

8.4 In a similarly positive spirit, under agenda, item **5.33**, the Science Commission recommended, after distinguished representatives from 12 States had taken the floor, to the General Conference that it adopt the resolution proposed in paragraph 14 of the document 40 C/76 as amended by the Commission, whereby the General Conference invites the Director-General to support all efforts leading to the United Nations General Assembly to proclaim 2022 as International Year of Basic Sciences for Sustainable Development. The amendment consisted of inserting text related to a broader participation of women, and for ensuring the insertion of the word “sustainable” throughout the text, so that it consistently would refer to sustainable development.

8.5 The Science Commission then had before it item **5.19** “Revision of the Statutes of the Intergovernmental Council of the International Hydrological Programme (IHP)”. The distinguished representatives of 22 Member States took the floor on this item, after which the Commission recommended to the General Conference that it approve the amendments to the Statutes of the Intergovernmental Council of the International Hydrological Programme as set out in Annex II of document 40 C/92.

8.6 At the end of the first meeting, and during its entire second meeting, as well as at the beginning of its third meeting, the Science Commission devoted its undivided attention to item **5.20** “Technical, financial and legal aspects of the desirability of a recommendation on open science”. The distinguished representatives of 49 Member States, and two non-governmental organizations took the floor on this item. The significant interest related to this item was on one hand a function of the importance of Member States attached to open science as a force for the common good in general, and as an enabler to the implementation of 2030 Agenda and the achievement of the SDGs in particular. Several Member States also underlined that, given its mandates, UNESCO was uniquely well placed to advance the elaboration of a new standard-setting instrument on open science. On the other hand, several Member States also recalled that the notion of open science could be subjected to different interpretations. Furthermore, if poorly designed, practical applications of open science could potentially have negative impacts on the quality of scientific research. Member States, therefore, called upon the Organization to engage in wider consultations. It was therefore important that the Science Commission could spend sufficient time, sufficient time on this item in order to seek to find consensus on the formulation of the resolution contained in document 40 C/63 and Add. In her response to the debate, the Assistant Director-General for Natural Sciences underlined the importance that UNESCO attaches to the role that open science plays to decreasing the knowledge divides. She encouraged Member States to consider the recommendation as a game-changer for the SDGs. Member States unanimously supported the recommendation to the General Conference that it adopt the resolution proposed in paragraph 5 of document 40 C/63 and Add. as amended by the Commission, whereby the General Conference recognizes the need for a new standard setting instrument on open science in the form of a recommendation to be presented to the General Conference as soon as possible, preferably At the 41st session, and that it takes note of the terms of reference of the Open Science Advisory Committee as contained in Annex II to document 40 C/63 and Add as amended, as in Annex II of document 40 C/92.

8.7 During the remaining parts of its third meeting, the Science Commission focused on item **4.2** “Consideration and adoption of the Draft Programme and Budget for 2020-2021. Part II.A: Major Programme II – Natural Sciences”. The Commission had before it a number of documents on this item. The distinguished representatives of 25 Member States, one Observer and one non-governmental organization took the floor on the item. The rich debates underlined the high expectations that Member States have on UNESCO as a key custodian of interdisciplinary science for enabling the effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. Indeed, the SDGs could drive the Programme and Budget for the 2020 2021 biennium for Major Programme II. Solutions for sustainable development need to draw on scientific evidence and be articulated in the framework of multidisciplinary, transdisciplinarity and intersectorality. In general, the importance of UNESCO’s intergovernmental and international

science programmes should be prominent in the new Programme and Budget documents. Member States strongly reiterated their concerns related to the negative consequences of climate change and biodiversity loss. These crises are expected to grow even more critical in the years to come. In this context, the UNESCO-designated science, that is to say biosphere reserves and UNESCO Global Geoparks, as well as World Heritage sites around the world, were referred to as unique and immensely valuable assets, providing UNESCO with a competitive advantage throughout the entire United Nations system for promoting science, innovation and partnerships for promoting sustainable development. Member States from the small island developing States made an appeal for UNESCO to prioritize their needs, and in particular of the Pacific region, and elaborate joint actions with appropriately assigned resources for capacity-strengthening in addressing climate-related disasters and for harnessing local and indigenous knowledge in the fight against climate change. For the next C/5 delegates requested a focus and an explicit link between science, technology and innovation, and job creation, the productive sectors, markets and sustainable economic development. Following a detailed and well-illustrated response by the ADG/SC, the Science Commission decided to recommend to the General Conference that it adopt the resolution proposed in paragraph 02000 of Volume 1 of document 40 C/5 concerning Major Programme II - Natural sciences, as amended by the Commission and by 40 C/DR.6 amended by Uganda, and by the appropriated regular programme budget of UNESCO as recommended in document 40 C/14 Rev.

8.8 At the start of the fourth meeting, the discussion of 40 C/5 continued with a recommendation to the General Conference to adopt the resolution related to the Abdus Salam International Centre for Theoretical Physics (ICTP), proposed in paragraph 02100 of Volume 1 of document 40 C/ 5, as amended by the appropriated regular programme budget of UNESCO as recommended in document 40 C/14 Rev. The Commission then moved on to items **3.1** Preparation of the Draft Medium-Term Strategy for 2022-2029 (41 C/4) for the Natural Sciences, and Item **3.2** "Preparation of the Draft Programme and Budget for 2022-2025 (41 C/5)" for the Natural Sciences. The Director of the Bureau of Strategic Planning introduced the items by outlining the proposed roadmap for the preparation of 41 C/4 and 41 C/5 documents. The ADG/SC presented thereafter some key ideas for reflection, for the preparation 41 C/4 and 41 C/5. Among other points, she proposed that UNESCO work in the Natural Sciences Sector could be articulated along two main streams, with basic sciences and science policy in one stream and the management of natural resources in the other.

8.9 She also presented nine points for reflection that triggered a rich and fruitful debate. This included a system approach to leverage science for the SDGs. In short, Member States underlined that the 41 C/4 should be built with the unhindered aim to deploy UNESCO's full potential towards achieving the SDGs so as to fully demonstrate the added value of the Organization and its science programmes. Its convening power in the implementation of SDGs should be deployed to build on collaboration with experts, academia, the research, community, civil society, notably youth, as well as the private sector. With a view to remaining relevant at the global level, the Organization has to address needs of Member States, in particular African countries and small island developing States. To that effect, several Member States advocated for an increase in financial and human resources for the Sector. While focusing on UNESCO's comparative advantage, coordination with other agencies are key and key stakeholders should be increased. The youth should be mainstreamed throughout all the programmes, including by ensuring youth participation in the decision-making processes for long-term and sustainable societies. The climate change and biodiversity crisis, disasters and threats to water security were again frequently referred to. Calls were made for strong contributions by the key scientific UNESCO programmes, i.e. the Man and the Biosphere (MAB), the International Hydrological Programme (IHP), the International Geoscience and Geopark Programme (IGGP) and the International Basic Sciences Programme (IBSP) to address these challenges. A more detailed summary of the debates on the 41 C/4 and 41 C/5 for the Natural Sciences is annexed to document 40 C/92.

8.10 The Science Commission then turned its attention to the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission under item **3.1** "Preparation of the Draft Medium-Term Strategy for 2022-2029 (41 C/4)" – the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission and item **3.2** "Preparation of the Draft Programme and Budget for 2022-2025 (41 C/5)" – Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission. In his introduction, ADG/IOC presented several key reflections for the future drafting of 41 C/4 and 41 C/5 related to the IOC. He recalled the functional autonomy and dual governance of the IOC within UNESCO, and the fact that many Member States had attended the 30th session of the IOC Assembly, during which preliminary proposals for the next draft Medium-Term Strategy had been outlined. He highlighted that the IOC aims at bringing the ocean science to a new level needed to inform decisions, stimulate and maintain efficient actions and policies for sustainable use and protection and management of the ocean. After this presentation, the floor was opened for debate. Several Member States expressed their support to the preliminary proposals for the Draft Medium-Term Strategy for 2022-2029 for the IOC. A majority of Member States highlighted that the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021-2030) offered an exceptional opportunity to maximize the societal benefits of all IOC programmes. For that, the IOC should bring together the scientific communities, the governmental decision-making system and a broader set of stakeholders within its Member States, including the private sector and the civil society as a whole, and strive to create an efficient, science-based, integrated ocean management. There was strong support for the fact that IOC should ensure that the two present global UNESCO's priorities Africa and gender, were mainstreamed in its strategic approach and reflected in its performance indicators in the Draft 41 C/5. It was noted that the Decade presents an unprecedented opportunity for expanding IOC's partnership base and boost fundraising. A more detailed summary of the debate on the 41 C/4 and 41 C/5 for the IOC is annexed to document 40 C/92.

8.11 The Science Commission concluded its deliberations by addressing item **4.2** "Consideration and adoption of the Draft Programme and Budget for 2020-2021 (40 C/5), Part II.A: – Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission". The ADG/IOC presented the plan for the 40 C/5 for IOC that stimulated a very interesting debate. The majority of Member States highlighted the importance of ocean observations and research that enable data collection and sharing, as well as the need to build Member States' resilience to ocean-related hazards through early warning and the mitigation programmes, and to help them fully benefit from the opportunities of the ocean through maritime spatial planning. From the debate it emerged clearly that the IOC should continue to focus its research on issues of crucial importance for sustainable development and to increase the capacity of the cutting-edge research through cooperation. In parallel, IOC

should continue to enhance the capacity of all IOC Member States to conduct scientific research and benefit from its results.

8.12 In ending. The Commission underscored the importance of the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development 2021-2030, as it will provide UNESCO and the IOC with a unique opportunity to place the vital importance of a healthy ocean closer to the heart of the sustainable development agenda.

8.13 Mr President, Madam Director-General, Honourable Ministers, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen, I am now coming to the end of my report. At this point, allow me to thank the members of the bureau of the Science Commission for their valuable support: Vice-Chairpersons Ms Liette Vasseur from Canada, Ms Claudine Le Marant de Kerdaniel from Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Mr Dendev Badarch from Mongolia, and Mr Mouïñ Hamzé from Lebanon. I also wish to pay tribute to the team of the Science Commission for their dynamic assistance behind the scenes: Mr Peter Dogse who has been the Secretary, Ms Marie Role Faber, Ms Christine Iskandar, Mr Simone Grego, Mr Patrice Boned and Mr Samuel Partey. Let me also thank Madam Shamila Nair-Bedouelle, the Assistant Director-General for Natural Sciences, and Mr Vladimir Ryabinin, Assistant Director-General and Executive Secretary of IOC for informing the debates.

8.14 In conclusion, Mr President, distinguished ladies and gentlemen, it has been a great honour for me to serve as Chair of the Science Commission, Major Programme II – Natural Sciences and the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission. I look forward to accompanying the work of the Science Commission over the next two years, to ensure that the Commission makes relevant and timely inputs for natural sciences and the IOC between now and the 41st session of the General Conference in 2021.

8.15 Finally, Mr President, you may wish to recall the United Nations Secretary-General's opening of this General Conference, and this message for science, technology and innovation for sustainable development. He was actually telling us to put a face to science.

8.16 Mr President, this is not written in my report. Before I end the report, I would also like to thank you most sincerely, for referring to me as your Excellency in the presence of my Ministers and my Ambassador. Thank you for your attention.

9. **The President:**

I know you are also Professor. For me, in this debate, whoever takes the floor I prefer to call Excellencies, giving due recognition of the importance of the debate. I did it several times, as Members know. Thank you, Excellency.

10. **Mr Simukanga** (Zambia) (Chairperson of the Science Commission):

Yes, I just said I enjoyed the title. It was different from Professor, and you know what? Each time you called me Excellency I was feeling excellent. I will cherish this experience and thank you very much.

11.1 **The President:**

Thank you, your Excellency. But it is not that you have been feeling excellent since some 20 years, 15 years maybe, but thank you for a very wholehearted report. I wish now to know whether there will be remarks or interventions of any kind regarding Professor Excellency Simukanga's report. You now have two titles, which is fine. May I then consider that the General Conference takes note of the Report of the SC Commission and hereby adopts the draft resolutions proposed in document 40 C/92 subject to the decisions that the Conference may take when adopting the Appropriation Resolution for 2020-2021? Thank you.

11.2 *It is so **decided**.*

11.3 I wish to congratulate all the members of the SC Commission for their good work. Ladies and gentlemen, we have just come to the end of our meeting today. The Plenary will reconvene tomorrow afternoon at 3 p.m. to adopt the remaining reports of the Commissions and Committees. I wish to remind the members of the Bureau that there will be no meeting tomorrow morning. I wish you a pleasant evening. This meeting is now *adjourned*.

The meeting rose at 4.50 p.m.