

9. **The President:**

Thank you, Your Excellency. Our next speaker is His Excellency, Dr David Namwandi, Minister of Education of Namibia. Please.

10.1 **Mr Namwandi** (Namibia):

President of the General Conference, Chair of the Executive Board, Madam Director-General, Your Excellencies, I would like to congratulate you, Mr President, on your election as the President of the 37th session of the General Conference.

10.2 Regrettably, the current lack of financial resources clearly impacts negatively on the capacity of UNESCO to deliver on its mandate and it equally affects the morale of the Secretariat. So, since we all as Member States cherish the values of UNESCO in advancing international peace and the common welfare of humankind through collaboration and cooperation, we thus have duties and obligations to remit our assessed contributions timeously.

10.3 We have had a fruitful discussion on the post-2015 development agenda. We Member States now have a duty, through consensus, to provide the strategic direction to ensure that UNESCO provides a sharpened and resolute leadership in the development of the post-2015 global development agenda.

10.4 Namibia supports the strategic objective of developing education systems to foster holistic quality lifelong learning opportunities. My delegation equally supports a right-based approach to education, quality education and equity in education. Namibia further supports empowering learners to be creative thinkers and responsible global citizens at all times. We believe that there is a need for a paradigm shift in the manner in which curricula are designed. For Namibia, the salvation lies in exposing young people to vocational and technical training. Education must generate wealth and work for generations, for the nations of the world. Twenty-first century education should be embarked on by all Member States, as it enhances quality of life and that of human capital. Certainly this education shall deal effectively with complex planetary issues and societal sustainability.

10.5 Namibia supports the role of UNESCO in water resources management, the development and implementation of science, technology and innovation policies, capacity building and the management of natural disasters.

10.6 Namibia underscores the importance of activities aimed at strengthening ethical systems, the promotion of democracy and human rights, and the fight against racism, discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance.

10.7 The development and implementation of youth programmes within document 37 C/5 has become critical, if Member States are to defuse the ticking youth time bomb.

10.8 Namibia supports the promotion, protection and conservation of cultural heritage through effective implementation of the cultural conventions. Priority should further be given to the promotion of dynamic cultural and creative industries, as tools and enablers of socio-economic development.

10.9 We applaud the focus on the safety of journalists, the strengthening of community media, and the promotion of freedom of expression and free and pluralistic media. Namibia further encourages UNESCO to assist Member States in developing policy frameworks to facilitate equitable access to information and knowledge.

10.10 We welcome the Priority Gender Equality Action Plan for 2014-2021 and the Operational Strategy for Priority Africa, and look forward to effective implementation of activities foreseen under these two global priorities.

10.11 We noted the challenges posed by the current financial situation, but encourage the Director-General to ensure that the field network reform achieves its intended strategic objectives. Namibia recognizes the added values of the National Commissions for UNESCO, the Associated Schools Project Network (ASPnet), and the UNESCO networks in ensuring the visibility of UNESCO in Member States. We urge the Secretariat to utilize these networks in programme implementation.

10.12 In conclusion, Mr President, Namibia, being a product of international support and solidarity, will continue to cooperate with UNESCO, because its values and principles of creating a better world for all are dear to our hearts. I thank you.