

Joint Statement of ASEAN-UNESCO Committee (2 minutes)  
to be delivered at 202<sup>nd</sup> Session of the Executive Board  
Plenary Debate, 10 October 2017, UNESCO Headquarters  
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Mr. President, Madame Director-General,

1. I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the ten member states of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, or ASEAN, comprising Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam.
2. 2017 is a milestone year for ASEAN as it marks its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The establishment of an ASEAN Community in 2015 underlines ASEAN's aspirations to build an inclusive, rules-based, people-oriented, people-centred Community.
3. In doing so, we place utmost priority in the development of human resources, education, culture, science and technology in a sustainable and innovation-driven manner. We are committed to fulfilling the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 in a mutually-reinforcing manner. UNESCO is an important partner in this endeavour. The Framework Agreement for Cooperation between ASEAN and UNESCO is an important platform for our ongoing cooperation.
4. ASEAN is cognisant that this is an important period for UNESCO. We are electing a new DG at a time when UNESCO is facing serious challenges. Nevertheless, with challenges also come opportunities. The ongoing reform is an important process and opportunity to strengthen our organisation.
5. In this respect, we welcome the final report of the Working Group on Governance which will be discussed by the Board at this session. We note with appreciation its comprehensive recommendations to improve the inclusivity, transparency, efficiency and coherence of the Governing Bodies of UNESCO.
6. As a matter of principle, ASEAN's view is that greater participation of all Member States promotes diversity and plurality in our decision-making processes, which underpins effective multilateralism. Therefore, we believe that discussions on the issues of term limits for Executive Board membership and the election process for the Director-General should continue. In this regard, we support the submission of the Working Group on Governance's recommendations as a whole to the 39<sup>th</sup> session of the General Conference.

Thank you, Mr President.