

**Statement by Moin ul Haque, Ambassador/Permanent Delegate of**  
**Pakistan to UNESCO**  
**at the 202<sup>nd</sup> Session of UNESCO Executive Board**  
**10 October 2017**

**Director General Madam Irina Bokova,**  
**President of the Executive Board Ambassador Michael Worbs,**  
**Excellences, Ladies and Gentlemen**

Let me begin by first expressing our appreciation and gratitude to the outgoing Director General Madam Irina Bokova for her effective and able stewardship of the work of UNESCO over the last eight years. She would be remembered for her grace and openness and for steering the organization through turbulent waters, when she was confronted with some new and grave challenges.

UNESCO's ship is still in stormy waters with strong winds blowing, yet we look towards the future with hope and optimism.

I would also like to compliment the outgoing President of the Executive Board Ambassador Michael Worbs for his positive and efficient conduct of the Executive Board's meetings, and for his personal efforts to make the work of Executive Board more practical and productive.

**Excellences, Ladies and Gentlemen,**

We cannot deny this established fact that UNESCO which emerged from the ashes of the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War, has been greatly successful in healing the wounds of the war through an intellectual discourse, advocacy of soft power and thus bridging distances between nations.

Despite challenges, UNESCO has achieved many milestones in the fields of education, culture, science and communication. Conventions on World Heritage and Intangible Cultural Heritage, adoption of Global Education Agenda 2030, Establishment of Category-II Centres, drawing of ethical principles for climate change and focus on preserving culture heritage in areas of armed conflict are some key achievements of our organization.

Therefore, we fully agree with you Madam Director General when you said that our world today might have changed in many ways, but the idea which gave birth to UNESCO still inspires us.

However, it is so unfortunate that UNESCO which provided the ideal pathway to dialogue and reconciliation has fallen prey to a self-woven cobweb of our differences and disputes. Certain political issues are leading us more and more towards confrontation and away from a point where our interests converge and our objectives become common.

A wise man said that whenever history repeats itself, there is a price to pay. We do hope that together we could avoid that path and work to strengthen UNESCO through our collective efforts.

It is a momentous occasion for the organization as it elects a new Director General. We hope that the new Director General would be harbinger of glad tidings; a person who could chart a new journey for all of us. We do also hope that the new Director General, with the full support of the UNESCO member states would carry on the good work of his or her predecessors, assess our current challenges, initiate bold reforms and would prepare us for the future ahead.

Pakistan's commitment to UNESCO's mission of creating a just, peaceful and inclusive world order remains unwavering. As always, Pakistan

would continue to work hands in hands with the global community to make the world a better and safer place for our future generations.

Thank You.