

Remarks

**by His Excellency Mr. Ha Kim Ngoc, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs
of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam**

at the 202nd Session of the UNESCO Executive Board

(Paris, 9 October 2017)

Your Excellency Mr. Michael Worbs, Chairman of the UNESCO Executive Board,

Your Excellency Mdm. Irina Bokova, Director General of UNESCO,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

At the outset, on behalf of the Vietnamese delegation, I would like to extend my heartfelt sympathy to the people of countries suffering from flooding and monsoons in Asia, hurricanes and earthquakes in North and Central America and landslides and drought in Africa. Unpredictable natural disasters and the impact of climate change are threatening the lives and happiness of peoples from all over the world. This situation once again shows that UNESCO's programs and activities, including those related to climate change, are becoming more practical and urgent than ever.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Our Session takes place at a critical juncture. Climate change together with regional conflicts, trans-national crimes, terrorism, energy security and epidemics represent the major challenges of our time. Entrusted with the mission to “contribute to peace and security by promoting collaboration among the nations through education, science and culture”, UNESCO always makes sure that peace prevails and becomes a common denominator in all of its debates and programs. As the UN intellectual arm, a laboratory of ideas, UNESCO has played an essential role in bringing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development into reality and contributing to the building of peace, the eradication of poverty, sustainable development and intercultural dialogue through education, science, culture, communication and information. Many UNESCO's programs towards these aims have been successfully implemented in recent years by the UNESCO Member States through the Organization's governing bodies, especially the General

Conference and the Executive Board, and in coordination with the Secretariat. Yet, despite the remarkable outcomes achieved, UNESCO is still facing multiple challenges. This requires the Organization to reform itself to improve the efficiency and capacity of its governing bodies and deal with its financial difficulties.

For that reason, the 202nd Session of the Executive Board needs not only to review reports on the execution of UNESCO's programs and assess the budgetary situation of the Organization but also to focus on the reform process of UNESCO, solutions to overcome financial difficulties, as well as future directions of the Organization to rise above unprecedented challenges in a changing environment. Viet Nam commends the efforts of the Working Groups on governance, procedures and working methods of the governing bodies of UNESCO in putting forward comprehensive recommendations to improve the Organization's efficiency and helping it successfully fulfill its mandates.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Viet Nam attaches great importance to and wishes to promote the excellent relationship with UNESCO. The recent visit to Viet Nam by the UNESCO Director General in August 2017, which yielded many significant outcomes, is a vivid testimony to the ever expanding cooperation between Viet Nam and UNESCO. The regular dialogues and close cooperation between Viet Nam and UNESCO's Secretariat, the UNESCO Office in Hanoi and Regional Offices in Bangkok and Jakarta, and other partners, especially UN agencies in Viet Nam within the framework of the One UN Initiative have resulted in the successful realization of many UNESCO's initiatives and projects in Viet Nam, contributing to the sustainable development of our country and the wellbeing of our people. This is a vivid example for the success of the cooperation between UNESCO and its Member States, helping enhance the Organization's efficiency, relevance and visibility.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The world today is undergoing profound and rapid changes. The Fourth Industrial Revolution offers enormous development opportunities for all nations. Yet mankind is also faced with unprecedented challenges to security and development. The responsibility of UNESCO in helping the global community to achieve sustainable development has become more immense than ever. So has the expectation of countries vested in this UNESCO's noble task. These are also the responsibility and expectation that every UNESCO Member State entrusts on the new Director General.

In this respect, the Vietnamese Government's introduction of Ambassador Pham Sanh Chau as the candidate for the post of Director General of UNESCO reflects Viet Nam's desire, determination and capacity to participate in and further contribute to the work of UNESCO and the international community. A peace-loving country with a thousands-of-year history, having experienced prolonged wars for independence, freedom and unity, Viet Nam has successfully emerged from her national reconstruction in various fields and accomplished many achievements in the "Doi Moi" process. Pursuing the foreign policy of independence, self-reliance, peace, cooperation, diversification and multilateralization of external relations, Viet Nam is actively promoting international integration and wishes to be a friend, a reliable partner and responsible member of the international community. We seek new opportunities to work closely and build better relationship with all countries and international organizations, especially UNESCO. Viet Nam is determined to work together with all countries to find solutions for the current financial difficulties facing UNESCO and chart out the directions and measures to push forth the Organization's reform to become more effective.

The Vietnamese Government is convinced that Ambassador Pham Sanh Chau, the son of a peace-loving country, with his outstanding qualities in diplomatic career in general and in UNESCO affairs in particular, will earn the support of the Member States, international organizations and individuals who are interested in the noble goals of UNESCO.

Thank you for your kind attention!