



**Ministry of Education
International Affairs Office**

Speech by the Minister of Education of Brazil,
Mr. Milton Ribeiro
41st General Conference of UNESCO
November 10th

Madam Director-General, Audrey Azoulay,
Mr President of the General Conference, Ambassador
Santiago Mourão,
Dear Ministers and representatives of Member States,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a singular honor for me to be here at this General Conference presiding the Brazilian Delegation, as we celebrate the seventy-fifth anniversary of Unesco. My congratulations to all those who contributed, in the past and present, to consolidate this organization.

This is an excellent opportunity to celebrate, but at the same time we cannot forget the challenge of the Covid-19 pandemic and its effects on global education. We are here because we believe in cooperation as a successful way to find answers together and to support the reconstruction of education in the post-pandemic context. We also believe in the role of Unesco as a promoter of education, science, culture and information within its member states borders.

In view of these challenges, I believe in solutions presented by international cooperation, and I expect the results of this Conference to effectively determine policies, lines of action and programs that can help us rebuild our educational systems and recover from the losses caused by the pandemic – especially regarding literacy programmes, promotion of qualitative teacher training and vocational education, that are so necessary for the world's and Brazil's social and economic recovery.

In Brazil, we have been progressively advancing in structural actions. Our latest achievement has been the Assessment Platform, which allows teachers and managers to access personalized diagnostics on the current level of learning of elementary school students. This platform provides different types of assessments to be applied by the teachers themselves so that they can obtain an immediate diagnosis of the students' learning level, which is essential at this time of returning to face-to-face classes.

We are also launching the Creativity and Innovation Laboratory for Basic Education (or shortly LabCrie), an online tool that encourages teachers and managers to exchange experiences and to expand the use of new technologies and methodologies applied to education. With an investment around three million dollars, this action comes to reinforce, once again, our commitment to teacher training.

In this sense, we are also developing the Ministry of Education's collaborative virtual learning environment, the AVAMEC platform, which offers online courses and teacher training through new technologies and diverse pedagogical resources. More than one hundred and fifty courses are being offered to more than two million and a half teachers in our basic education network.

In order to implement the National Literacy Policy, the pillar of Brazilian education, we have created the "Time to Learn" program, which, through the Literacy Resource Online System, supports literacy and numeracy efforts in our country.

Regarding the Brazilian Secondary Education Reform, it is important to mention the efforts undertaken to adapt the pedagogical needs of each region and local schools to the requirements of our Common National Curriculum Base. One of the main possibilities of our secondary education lies on the technical and vocational training. We consider that the strengthening of vocational and technical education is an important means to provide opportunities and enable students to face the labour market and to compete for jobs at the private sector. Teenagers may thus opt for technical and professional training within school hours in order to pursue a profession at a later stage. In order to develop all of these possibilities, the "Programa Novos Caminhos", in English "New Paths Programme", is based on three strategic axes: management and results;

innovation and entrepreneurship; articulation and strengthening. We are making efforts to raise the attractiveness and prestige of professional and vocational education in Brazil, especially technical courses and workshops, and to expand the educational horizons of second-grade students, in order to ensure that a larger and more qualified number of young people leave school well-equipped to find a job.

I could mention many other programmes we are implementing and improving to overcome the current challenges of Brazilian education. Many of these challenges are persistent ones, and we are putting our best efforts to tackle them: unequal access to quality education, illiteracy, especially adult illiteracy, school dropout at all levels, and many others. That leads to our huge efforts in improving the overall quality of education and the school infrastructure – including the expansion of connectivity, a major challenge in a country as big as Brazil.

On the other hand, the Brazilian federative structure adds to the complexity of our educational system. The effectiveness of our policies and programmes depends directly on the commitment and legal responsibilities at state and municipal levels. In this regard, it is important to highlight and further stimulate the involvement of Unesco with all these actors in order to ensure an effective educational cooperation and the improvements Brazilians so eagerly expect.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Let me thus strongly reaffirm the Brazilian government's commitment to overcome all the current and historical challenges in education, side by side with Unesco, whose presence in my country is traditionally strong.

Lastly, I seize this occasion to congratulate my compatriot, Ambassador Santiago Mourão, for his election as President of this General Conference.

Thank you very much!