

**NATIONAL STATEMENT**  
**of the Republic of Uzbekistan at the General Policy Debate of the**  
**41<sup>st</sup> Session of the General Conference of UNESCO**  
(Paris, November 10, 2021)

Mr. President of the General Conference,  
Madame Director General,  
Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I. It is a great pleasure for me to speak from this tribune of the UNESCO General Conference. I commend the efforts of the UNESCO's Secretariat to gather us in person despite current difficulties. I am pleased that we are gradually returning to normal work after a long period of virtual life under the pandemic.

First, I would like to congratulate H.E. Ambassador Santiago Mourao on his election as the president of the General Conference for the next two years. I wish you, Mr. President, all the best in this important and responsible endeavor.

I also sincerely congratulate H.E. Madame Audrey Azoulay, Director General of UNESCO, on her appointment for the second term. I would like to extend full support of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan H.E. Shavkat Mirziyoyev, to you and your distinguished team. You managed the Secretariat in the best possible manner throughout your first term that partially coincided with challenging times of pandemic. We are confident that under your leadership during upcoming years UNESCO will lead us to new heights on our way to achieve relevant Sustainable Development Goals.

II. Today, when the old challenges, like climate change, continue to escalate, and at the same time we face some new challenges, like global pandemic, we need UNESCO as never before and its leadership is irreplaceable. The Organization that oversees almost all major aspects of human life has turned 75 - we will celebrate this important milestone in these days.

We fully share widely supported vision that today UNESCO is on the right path. I would like to commend the productive work the Organization has done to support member states when they were hit by the pandemic. We found relevant and timely all key initiatives launched by UNESCO to respond COVID-19, like Global Education Coalition, “ResiliArt” movement, “Next Normal” campaign and many more.

**III.** Uzbekistan, being an active stakeholder in the international community, under the leadership of President Mirziyoyev has been putting great efforts across broad issues within UNESCO mandate. The investment to advance culture, education, science and information sectors has redoubled, in some cases tripled, during the pandemic to mitigate negative impacts and keep these areas intact.

For instance, to preserve cultural heritage we adopted plan to introduce modern digital technologies to create 3D copies of all four World Heritage Properties. In education and science fields, we are running Presidential Programs “New Uzbekistan” and “The Third Renaissance”, respectively. In the last years, the media sector is flourishing with an unprecedentedly high pace.

**IV.** In our development strategies, we attach significance to fully utilize the opportunities that UNESCO offers. In the last two years since the official visit of UNESCO Director General Ms. Azoulay to Uzbekistan in August 2019, we managed to raise the UNESCO’s program presence in my country. Despite pandemic, the Organization, as usual, supported us widely in arranging major international and regional events.

We also thank UNESCO for its support to promote our initiative “Khiva Process” in recent Executive Board meeting. This idea was launched as the main outcome of International Forum that was organized in Khiva in September at the initiative of President Mirziyoyev. “Khiva Process” will establish a new platform to strengthen international collaboration in Central Asia within the areas of UNESCO’s mandate. We are confident that this framework will add value in the efforts taken by UNESCO in the region.

To promote “Khiva Process” we submitted a resolution of General Conference. We also have some other important documents concerning the organization of World Forum on Early Childhood Education in Uzbekistan and the celebration of 1050<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Abu Raykhon Beruniy. We look forward and count on the support of member states in adopting these important resolutions in this Session.

**V.** In conclusion, I would like to reiterate that Uzbekistan is strongly determined to support UNESCO’s activities as well as to further boost bilateral partnership. We are candidates to the UNESCO Executive Board for the term starting in 2023 and also to the Intergovernmental Committee on Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage next year.

We have some important projects ranging from inscribing “Bakhshi Art” and “Zarafshan Silk Road Corridor” on the relevant UNESCO lists and promoting biodiversity and geoparks to holding global celebrations of International Day for Universal Access to Information and many more.

We look forward to working closely with all stakeholders on these matters and further promoting UNESCO’s mandate internationally.

Thank you.