



**THE REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA**

**NATIONAL STATEMENT**

**BY**

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**AT THE**

**41<sup>ST</sup> SESSION OF UNESCO GENERAL CONFERENCE**

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**PARIS, FRANCE**

**Mr. President**  
**Director-General**  
**Excellencies**

**Good morning**

- 1.** Thank you for giving the opportunity to speak and represent my country Botswana at this esteemed conference.
- 2.** Mr. President, Botswana would like to join other Member States in congratulating you on your election to the Presidency of the 41<sup>st</sup> session of UNESCO General Conference and wish you success in conducting the proceedings of this important session. We will also like to congratulate the director General for her reappointment and we wish you well in your next term.

**Education**

- 3.** During UNESCO 2014 – 2021 Mid – Term Strategy Botswana developed an Education and Training Sector Strategic Plan (ETSSP) which built on Botswana’s performance in the six

areas of the Education for All goals and activities related to Millennium Development Goals. The ETSSP is aligned to Education 2030 Agenda and its main aim is to improve access, quality, inclusion and equity, accountability and governance in the education system.

4. Mr President, Botswana has been able to achieve gender equality in terms of access and participation by both boys and girls in education. Access to basic education has increased to over 90%, but at tertiary education it remains slightly over 25% due to limited space and sponsorship. We are now reviewing the Education Act and developing national education policies and plans to advance e-education, inclusive education, learning pathways, language policy and many more. The expected results of our domesticated UNESCO Programme and Budget for 2020 – 2021 are becoming a reality.

## **Natural Sciences**

- 5.** Mr. President, For Sustainable Development as well as the promotion of sustainable livelihoods there is need for UNESCO to continue building the capacities of its Member States to design effective science policies as well as build capacity in the technology land scape including putting more emphasis on Indigenous Knowledge Systems.
- 6.** Botswana also supports the move towards a standard setting instrument on Open Science and activities that support girls and women in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM). The STEM festival is held annually, while Research and Innovation Symposium is held every two years in order to build awareness on STEM. Botswana is in the process of establishing the national fund for research whilst the innovation fund has been running for few years now.
- 7.** Regarding the L'Oréal-UNESCO Prize for Women in Science, Botswana embraces the objectives of the Prize and we are proud to inform the house that in 2020 two Batswana female PhD students were awarded.

## **Social and Human Sciences**

**8.** Mr. President, Botswana notes with regret that climate change remains one of the greatest challenges that the world is facing today. As such, there is need for UNESCO to show commitment to addressing this global challenge by developing a clear mitigation strategy that will form part of the next UNESCO Medium Term Strategy (2022 – 2029).

## **Culture**

**9.** Mr. President, Botswana's Vision 2036 prioritizes three interventions that are critical to expanding both demand and supply for the Creative Industries, namely world class infrastructure, facilities as well as institutional and regulatory frameworks that protect and support the development of the creative industries. The establishment of Botswana National Arts Council in 2021 will regulate and optimise the potential of the creative sector for economic benefit. In addition, the National Strategy for the Creative Industries (NSCI) prioritizes research, training and knowledge transfer. Botswana has

planned the establishment of the state theatre as a deliberate effort to provide a purpose built facility for the promotion and preservation of the arts and culture as well as the development of the cultural and creative industries is planned.

**10.** Botswana is one of the Member States that continues to enjoy UNESCO Priority “Africa” as it received financial and technical support from the UNESCO Participation Programme to conduct national capacity building for all border officials on combating illicit trafficking of cultural property as well as protection of cultural property in the event of war.

### **Communication and Information.**

**11.** Botswana commits to the implementation of the new UNESCO Medium Term Strategy for 2022-2029 C/4 and the Programme and Budget for 2022-2023 C/5 which are aligned to Agenda 2030.

**12.** In conclusion Mr President, Botswana has deemed it appropriate to propose to this General Assembly, her commitment to further serve UNESCO by becoming a member

of the UNESCO Executive Board. Botswana will therefore be one of the candidates for the Board during the election on the 17 November 2021 and I appeal to you to support . Thank you.