



Republic of Rwanda
Ministry of Education

RWANDA STATEMENT

By

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Ambassador and Permanent Delegate of Rwanda to UNESCO

41st General Conference of UNESCO

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- **Mr. President of the General Conference**
- **Chairman of the Executive Board**
- **Madam Director General of UNESCO**
- **Distinguished Heads of Delegations**
- **Excellencies, Dear colleagues**
- **Ladies and Gentlemen,**
Good morning!

1. I am delighted to address the participants of the 41st General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. I do recognize the presence of every participant with much consideration of the role you play in promotion of education, science, and culture Worldwide.
2. Mr President, allow me to congratulate you on your election as President of the 41st General Conference. I would also to take this opportunity to congratulate the Director General, Madam Audrey Azoulay for her re-election for a 2nd mandate and express my appreciation for the remarkable work done with her technical team in preparing the Draft Program and Budget documents for 2022-2025 (41 C/5). Madam Director General, we very much value your great leadership of the Organization during the last 4 years and wish you success for the upcoming mandate.

Mr President,
Distinguished Delegates;

3. Education is a fundamental human right. In Rwanda, we believe that inclusive and equitable quality Education for all, women and men, boys and girls, in rural or urban, rich or poor and without forgetting learners with disabilities is fundamental not only to realization of Sustainable Development Goals but also to reaching country's human capital development.

4. Rwanda has registered progress in terms of increasing access at all levels of education and has initiated several policy priorities towards quality of education. These include Revamping pre-service teacher training, continuous professional development, teachers' career path, ensuring increased access to pre-primary education, strengthening primary education, efficient implementation of the Competence Based Curriculum (CBC); and increasing the use of ICT in teaching and learning through scaling up SMART classrooms and ICT devices to teachers.

Mr President,

Ladies and Gentlemen, Distinguished delegates;

5. COVID-19 pandemic outbreak has negatively impacted the education sector, diverse efforts were taken in response to the pandemic, including development and implementation of the Covid-19 Response Plan in Education Sector, safe school reopening, introduction of TV and Radio learning and strengthening e-learning platforms during the school closure.
6. Learners' safety remains Rwanda's preoccupation and making learning environment attractive and comfortable cannot be over emphasized. In a period of less than a year, the Government of Rwanda constructed 22,505 new classrooms to reduce overcrowding and long distance, 2,606 kitchens and their appliances to scale up school feeding program to all, over 1,000 group handwashing facilities in schools and 87 new TVET wings and schools to expand access to TVET. For the first time, massive teacher recruitment was conducted where more than 28,000 teachers were recruited to occupy the additional constructed classrooms and newly constructed schools.
7. Rwanda has also made tremendous improvement in ICT in education as a strategic lever for reaching quality education and transforming the futures of education towards Rwanda's vision 2050. The Government of Rwanda through the Ministry of Education and its implementing agencies has provided the needed technical skills to teachers.

Distinguished Delegates,

8. Regarding the environmental sector, Rwanda has put in place several strategies for a sustainable management and protection of the immediate ecosystem in support of the tourism sector. One of the best practices adopted by the Government of Rwanda is the ban of plastic bags.
9. UNESCO has last year designated the Rwanda second Biosphere Reserve, the Gishwati-Mukura landscape, 37 years after the designation of Rwanda first Biosphere Reserve, the the Volcanoes Biosphere Reserve designated in 1983 and well known for its tourism of the Mountain gorillas. We hope to have also very soon the Nyungwe National Park as Rwanda first Natural World Heritage site.
10. Rwanda welcomed the recent decision to create an open ended working group to deepen and expand the reflection of the issue of accession of sites of memory to the list of World Heritage. Rwanda pledges the best of its contribution to this reflection, informed by our own history and lessons learnt from the unspeakable 1994 genocide against the tutsis for which UNESCO dedicates a specific outreach education program.

Mr President,

11. The Government of Rwanda highly welcomes more partners to work with in the Education Sector including UN Agencies, Multilateral and Bilateral Organizations, Internationals NGOs, National NGOs, and private Companies to learn from best practices and effective global education cooperation.
12. To conclude, I would like to urge all delegates from UN Member States participating to this conference to come together and address challenges facing the education sector that have been aggravated by COVID 19 pandemic: building more resilient education systems and bounce back on track for successful implementation of SDG4.

13. Finally, distinguished Delegates, I would kindly like to remind you that Rwanda has submitted its candidature for UNESCO World Heritage Committee for the period 2021-2025 during the elections to be held during the 23rd session of the General Assembly of States Parties to the Convention. Rwanda is willing, committed and capable to making significant contribution to the committee's work, in the highest interest of the entire Organization's agenda. We thank all the member states in advance for your unvaluable support.

Thank you for your kind attention.