

## **IFBPW/ BPW International statement PLENARY session 41 General Conference**

**Marie-Claude Machon-Honoré- 11:11.2021**

I am here from the International Federation of Business, Professional Women, NGO-UNESCO Liaison Committee member elected for the Europe & North America region. Our 90+ year old organization has more than 30K members who touch at least 150K women and girls in over 100 countries. We are member of the Council of Europe and the European Lobby of Women, and were one of the first NGOs to get consultative status by ECOSOC in 1947.

We commend all of UNESCO's great work and have contributed to UNESCO's most recent initiatives on the Futures of Education and support Open Science for the sake of All.

But we think UNESCO MUST do MORE to address the world's most CRITICAL challenge TODAY -- climate change. Scientists warn us that we only have a decade to transition to the LAST REMAINING path to a sustainable 2050. Most important are accelerating transition to renewable energy and doubling the productivity of sustainable food chains, better water management and educating women and girls.

Three things UNESCO can do to accelerate this transition

INTENSIFY URGENCY .... Global leaders have wasted valuable time debating climate change and humans' role rather than focusing on developing and sharing solutions. EVERY citizen NOW needs to learn not only how to reduce their carbon emissions and adapt to a warming planet, but also how to influence companies and governments to shift to renewable energies like solar. Youth and females are using their voices and the media but few are leveraging their economic powers.

DRIVE CROSS FERTILIZATION AND COLLABORATION ... Old processes like COP26 are failing. New postCOVID19 reality requires newer and faster processes. UNESCO brings people and nations together through education, culture and science. How can UNESCO bring together education, culture and science to transform lives and futures? If scientists leveraged technologies, broke down barriers and collaborated in unprecedented ways to develop several COVID19 vaccines in record time, how can UNESCO bring those lessons to educators and culture makers?

AMPLIFY positive actions and lessons ... Business cases and regulations are not moving the needle fast enough, but millions around the world jumped into action after getting inspired by a simple picture of young Swedish girl skipping classes on behalf of the planet. Touching hearts moves people to action. With various platforms reaching out to millions of people, how can UNESCO exponentially touch their hearts around the world for climate action?

In conclusion, the International Federation of Business, Professional Women as UNESCO's official partner for 75 years, we believe in cooperation across sectors and we push for active action so that we Women and Men, can all together in multiple partnerships, help accelerate the world's transition to a sustainable 2050 and create the future we all want.

