

### Third plenary meeting of the 41st session of the General Conference

Wednesday 10 November 2021 at 10.10 a.m.

President: **Mr Irazabal Mourão** (Brazil)

#### First report of the Bureau

##### 1.1 The President:

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, please. We are going to resume our work. Good morning to all of you. I declare open the third plenary meeting of the General Conference, which will be devoted to the general policy debate. Before we start with national statements, I wish to inform you that the Bureau held its first meeting this morning, of which I am pleased to give you a short report now. Allow me to give you that oral report, the summary key recommendations. During the meeting of the Bureau held this morning, the Chairperson of the UNESCO Executive Board introduced the preparation by the Board of the organization of the work of the 41st session of the General Conference at the 211th and 212th sessions of the Board. A revised version of the document concerning the organization of the work of the 41st session of the General Conference has been submitted under the document 41 C/2 Prov.Rev.2. The Chairperson of the Board also recalled that in the last plenary of the Executive Board, it was recommended that the 41st session of the Conference would take place in person and the Executive Board recommended to include the specific guidelines and access to the French territory note, along with the respective *note verbale* from the French authorities as annexed to document 41 C/2.

1.2 The Executive Board also recommended to include as an annex, the consensus text as approved by the opened working group established by the Executive Board, in 211 EX/ Decision 27.II on the working method of the 41st session of the General Conference, in the event that the sanitary situation did not allow an in-person meeting of the General Conference. Even though the 41st session of the General Conference is meeting in person, this consensus text can serve for any future eventuality where any *in presentia* meeting of the General Conference will not be possible and is thus enclosed for adoption. Upon this presentation, the Bureau recommended the organization of the work of the 41st session of the General Conference, as contained in document 41 C/2 Prov.Rev.2., for adoption by the plenary. It was also agreed that in order for delegates to participate on 12 November in the afternoon in the high-level segment with the participation of Heads of State of governments for the celebration of the 75th anniversary of UNESCO, the APX and EB Commissions will suspend their work in the afternoon of that day and continue the work on Saturday, full day. Finally, the Bureau also decided to recommend that items **5.5**, **5.11**, **5.12**, **6.2** and **11.1** be added to the agenda of the legal committee. May I take that the General Conference agreed to take note of this report? I see no comments. *It is so decided.*

#### General policy debate (continued)

##### 2.1 The President:

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, let us start with the General Policy Debate. Yesterday afternoon the Chairperson of the Executive Board reported on the work of the Board of the past two years. The Director-General assessed the achievement made by UNESCO and eloquently outlined her vision and ambition for the Organization in the following years. Now we will listen to the national statements we started today and will continue all day, from today up to Monday afternoon with the exception of the afternoon of 12 November when the high-level segment with the participation of Heads of States and governments for the celebration of the 75th anniversary of UNESCO will take place. The Director-General and her senior management team seated here beside us will follow closely all your remarks and deliberations. The Director-General will deliver her reply to the general policy debate on Monday afternoon. Before we start with our first speaker, please allow me to remind you that each head of delegation has six minutes to address the plenary. I understand that it is difficult to address complex issues in such a short intervention. I am also fully aware that many of you distinguished ministers and heads of delegations have travelled from afar to share your wisdom and concerns.

2.2 However, it is in the interest of all of us to keep within the six-minute timeframe in order to have an efficient, productive and balanced debate. If you had already prepared a longer speech, you may request the Secretariat to publish the extended version of your text. To help you time your intervention, we have again put in place a visual and a sound system. A brief musical sign will indicate that you have one minute left to finish your speech. Once you have reached the end of the allocated time, different pieces of world music will start playing. There will be a rising crescendo as the speech continues. In addition, and this is the worst part of it, as President of the General Conference, having power to interrupt any speaker exceeding the time limit. Although I am certain that it will not be necessary. I thank you in advance for your understanding and cooperation in this regard. Please also kindly note that due to the current exceptional sanitary measures some of the Member States have requested that their national statements be delivered in the format of a pre-recorded video message. Now, ladies and gentlemen, it is my honour to call His Excellency, Mr Augusto Santos Silva, Minister of State and Foreign Affairs of Portugal.

##### 3.1 Mr Santos Silva (Portugal):

*(address delivered in Portuguese; French text provided by the delegation):*

Monsieur le Président de la Conférence générale, Ambassadeur Santiago Mourão, Madame la Directrice générale de l'UNESCO, Audrey Azoulay Excellences, mesdames et messieurs, je voudrais tout d'abord féliciter la Directrice générale de l'UNESCO, dont le Portugal a soutenu la réélection depuis le tout début, et lui souhaiter beaucoup de succès dans son nouveau mandat. La dernière période biennale a été marquée par la pandémie de COVID-19. Tous les secteurs en ont souffert. La crise a accentué les inégalités préexistantes, notamment en termes de revenus, d'opportunités, d'accès à la connaissance, d'égalité des genres.

3.2 Mais je mettrai l'accent sur le secteur de l'éducation. Au plus fort de la pandémie, plus de 1,5 milliard d'enfants et de jeunes, soit 91% de la population scolaire mondiale, ont été affectés par la fermeture des écoles. Une situation sans

précédent dans l'histoire. Dans ce contexte, nous avons besoin de toute notre énergie pour nous dépasser, réinventer nos politiques et créer des solutions innovantes. L'UNESCO a bien répondu à la crise mondiale de l'éducation en faisant un usage déterminé et efficace de tous les instruments à sa disposition et en lançant avec agilité de nouvelles initiatives orientées vers l'action, comme la création de la Coalition mondiale pour l'éducation.

3.3 Nous saluons les efforts entrepris pour repositionner l'UNESCO au centre de la coopération internationale en matière d'éducation et, à cet égard, nous soutenons fermement le nouveau mécanisme mondial de coopération en matière d'éducation, dont le Ministre de l'Education du Portugal fera partie du Comité directeur de haut niveau.

3.4 Toujours dans le domaine de l'éducation, c'est avec une satisfaction particulière que nous assisterons aujourd'hui au lancement du Rapport sur les Futurs de l'Education. Avec ce nouveau rapport, l'UNESCO nous invite, et je cite Audrey Azoulay, « à promouvoir l'éducation comme droit fondamental, et plus puissant instrument de développement qui soit ». « Défendre l'avenir de ce droit, c'est défendre le droit à l'avenir ». Et permettez-moi de saluer ici l'Ambassadeur du Portugal, António Sampaio da Nóvoa, qui a contribué de manière décisive à la réalisation de ce rapport.

3.5 Je tiens également à exprimer notre satisfaction particulière quant à l'adoption espérée par la Conférence générale de la Recommandation sur la science ouverte, qui a suscité, lors de son élaboration, une adhésion enthousiaste et largement partagée. Toujours dans le domaine de la science, l'UNESCO remplit bien son mandat, en soutenant un mouvement essentiel vers une nouvelle coopération scientifique internationale, dont la pertinence et la nécessité ont été perçues par tous dans la lutte contre la pandémie de COVID-19.

3.6 Mesdames et messieurs, la vitalité et le dynamisme de l'UNESCO se reflètent dans la Stratégie à Moyen Terme 2022-2029 – que le Portugal soutient sans réserve – fondée sur une approche centrée sur les droits de l'homme, ayant pour horizon la réalisation des Objectifs de Développement Durable dans les domaines de compétence de l'Organisation. Le Portugal défend l'alignement de l'UNESCO sur la modernisation et la revitalisation de l'ONU promues par le Secrétaire général António Guterres. Son rapport « Notre programme commun » contient un programme de changement ambitieux, essentiel si nous voulons relever les défis actuels et futurs. Nous souscrivons à ses recommandations et propositions de grande portée, et nous nous battons pour leur mise en œuvre.

3.7 Le Portugal, fidèle à son engagement en tant qu'État membre de l'UNESCO, participe régulièrement au Conseil exécutif, et est à quelques jours de la fin de son mandat actuel dans cet organe. Nous défendons et pratiquons le principe de la limitation des mandats consécutifs et l'idée de rotation, de sorte que nous ne nous représenterons à cet organe directeur qu'en 2029.

3.8 Je voudrais laisser un mot de remerciement à l'Ambassadeur António Nóvoa pour la manière exemplaire dont il a représenté le Portugal à l'UNESCO. Mes remerciements vont à Monsieur l'Ambassadeur et à sa compétente équipe. Je tiens également à souligner notre participation au Conseil exécutif de la Commission océanographique intergouvernementale, les océans étant une priorité de notre politique extérieure. Nous sommes engagés dans l'utilisation durable des océans, des mers et des ressources maritimes. Le Portugal organisera, en partenariat avec le Kenya, la deuxième Conférence des Nations unies sur les Océans entre le 27 juin et le 1er juillet 2022 à Lisbonne. Nous espérons pouvoir compter sur une participation nombreuse et de haut niveau.

3.9 Dans le domaine des conventions culturelles de l'UNESCO, le Portugal a participé régulièrement en tant que membre du Comité du patrimoine mondial. Il y a environ un an, nous avons annoncé la première candidature du Portugal au Comité de sauvegarde du patrimoine immatériel pour le mandat 2022-2026. Avec cette candidature, nous entendons contribuer aux objectifs collectifs de la Convention. Nous espérons pouvoir compter sur votre confiance et votre soutien.

3.10 J'espère également que dans les prochains jours, le Portugal sera élu au Conseil intergouvernemental de coordination du Programme sur l'homme et la biosphère pour le mandat 2021-2025. Nous chercherons à mettre à la disposition de ce programme notre expérience en matière de biodiversité, de neutralité climatique et de transition vers une économie verte, ainsi que le savoir-faire du réseau portugais des Réserves de Biosphère.

3.11 Nous continuerons ainsi à contribuer aux travaux de l'Organisation de multiples façons et dans différents domaines. Je tiens à mettre en exergue le « Centre international de formation avancée en sciences fondamentales pour les scientifiques des pays de langue portugaise ». Ce centre de l'UNESCO, inauguré en mars de cette année et basé à Lisbonne, a pour mission de mobiliser le transfert de connaissances entre les pays de la Communauté des pays de langue portugaise, et de favoriser la coopération dans les domaines de la science, de la technologie et de l'enseignement supérieur.

3.12 Il y a plus de 265 millions de locuteurs parlant le portugais dans le monde, et la proclamation, lors de la dernière Conférence générale, du 5 mai comme Journée mondiale de la langue portugaise est la reconnaissance de sa pertinence, de sa richesse et de sa diversité au niveau mondial. Je salue le Président de la Conférence générale, en me félicitant de l'élection d'un représentant du Brésil, un pays frère qui parle la même langue, le portugais.

3.13 Enfin, je suis heureux de prendre note des propositions du Portugal visant à associer l'UNESCO à la commémoration d'éphémérides historiques, qui, je l'espère, seront approuvées lors de cette session : le centenaire de la naissance de l'écrivain José Saramago, prix Nobel de littérature ; le centenaire de la première traversée aérienne de l'Atlantique Sud par les aviateurs portugais Gago Coutinho et Sacadura Cabral; le 500<sup>e</sup> anniversaire du premier voyage de circumnavigation, commandé par Magellan et Juan Sebastian Elcano, proposé conjointement avec l'Espagne.

3.14 Mesdames et messieurs, à 75 ans, l'UNESCO est une organisation dynamique avec un programme ambitieux, vaste et actuel. Il s'agit d'un instrument de paix tourné vers l'avenir. Elle est, comme l'a dit Federico Mayor, « la conscience des Nations Unies ». Merci beaucoup.

4. **The President:**

Thank you very much. *Obrigado*, the Minister of State and Foreign Affairs of Portugal. Now I call, H.E. Ms Olta Xhacka, Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs of Albania.

5.1 **Ms Xhacka (Albania):**

Mr President, Madam Director-General, ladies and gentlemen. I am very pleased to participate in this 41st session of the General Conference and I am very happy and I wish to congratulate the Director-General for her second mandate. I truly believe that she is the person best suited to meet the many challenges that UNESCO faces today on its 75th anniversary. This 75th anniversary is a good occasion to celebrate how much the Organization has achieved during its existence. But I believe that while it has played an important role in its first 75 years, UNESCO has an even more important role to play today. Indeed, I believe that UNESCO is uniquely suited to addressing the many challenges of our age. We live in a world where culture and identity politics that find their rationale and foundation on a bedrock of cultural traits, values and assumptions have on many an occasion, become the great faultiness that divides people. We live in a world that has benefited greatly from technology and science, but that is always experiencing the downside of the science and technology revolution, especially in the areas of communication and information sharing, which instead of serving as vehicles for positive information exchange, have often become vectors through which conspiracy, hate and division are circulated in an endless feedback loop. And we live in a world where education, the greatest and most powerful weapon in the world has against hate and division and conspiracy has unfortunately not always been able to keep up the pace of change. It has not always been able to inoculate our societies against the negative effects of identity politics and mass communication.

5.2 There are all difficult, complex issues beyond the ability of any single country or any single group of countries, however powerful to solve. There are exactly the type of issues for which this Organization was created 75 years ago in a world that was just emerging from a nightmare caused by forces that are very similar to those challenging us today. The difference is that today we can do something about it, and UNESCO has a special role to play in this effort.

5.3 We must work together to promote education, which is by far the most ambitious commitment of the Organization, including as the lead agency in the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 4 within the United Nations system. The task is immense and results have thus far been limited. The pandemic has made it even harder to progress, but there is no alternative because we need quality education for all as the best investment to shape and build the future, reduce poverty, inequality and various disparities, as well as to counter distorted and extremist narratives. We must work together to promote human rights, which are at the heart of UNESCO's mandate. We will not be successful in building a culture of peace, eradicating poverty, achieving sustainable development and developing intercultural dialogue without respecting the rights of everyone without distinction. Albania has a special role to play in these efforts. A few weeks from now, my country will sit at the Security Council for a two-year mandate. We go to the Council with an ambitious agenda focusing on human rights and the belief in dialogue and inclusion as the best guarantee to handle many of the crises we face today – from radicalism to violation of human rights, from identity politics to the exclusion of women, from playing a decisive role in society, especially when it comes to conflict prevention and resolution. It is also from this perspective and from this unique opportunity to contribute that I address this General Conference as a sign of commitment on the part of my country to play a constructive and active role in meeting the challenges that we all face today.

5.4 In conclusion, and very much in line with Albania's commitment to promoting peace cooperation and human rights, I do have an appeal for the Organization and the colleagues. UNESCO has been very active in the region, in my region. Yet this activity has not been all inclusive as any activities and agendas pursued by UNESCO must be, by definition. Effective, regional, broader cooperation in the fields of education, culture, science and community cannot be achieved without comprehensive participation and input by all the people of the region, including the one country of Europe that surprisingly is still excluded and that is Kosovo. I say surprisingly, because the inclusion of Kosovo would not only be the right thing to do, but the inclusion of Kosovo would also be the sound thing to do if indeed the priority is to deal with the recurrent claims regarding the preservation of the Serbian cultural heritage in Kosovo. Because the truth is that there is no better and more efficient way to deal with the preservation of cultural heritage than through joint, national and international efforts. Therefore, I sincerely hope that reason will ultimately prevail, and Kosovo will be welcomed here so that its citizens, Albanian Serbs and others join this large community and work together with other nations in promoting the principles and values that bring us together here. Thank you very much for your attention.

6. **The President:**

Thank you. Thank you very much for your statement. I give the floor to His H.E. Mr Gabrielius Landsbergis, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Lithuania. You have the floor, sir.

7.1 **Mr Landsbergis (Lithuania):**

Mr President of the General Conference, Madam Director-General, Excellencies, distinguished colleagues. Let me begin by expressing appreciation of the efforts of the Director-General aimed at strengthening UNESCO for the past four years. Lithuania continues to support and contribute to UNESCO's work, in line with the Medium-Term Strategy for 2022-2029. We align ourselves with the European Union statement to be delivered later in this session. The unique UNESCO mandate in education, science and culture allows the strengthening of lasting peace, sustainable development and human rights by facilitating dialogue among nations. We should continue effective use of all instruments and resources at our disposal to reach the Organization's goals.

7.2 Since 1991, as a member of UNESCO, Lithuania has actively engaged in the implementation of UNESCO's mandate. In this light we presented our candidature to the UNESCO Executive Board for the term 2021-2025, with a view to further supporting inclusive and high-quality education for all, promote the development of science, digital technologies and innovations, as well as enhancing media and information literacy. Lithuania will continue to be a vocal advocate of the freedom of expression, access to information, media freedom, and safety of journalists. Combatting disinformation and misinformation will also remain high on my country's agenda. That is why Lithuania presented its candidature for the

Council of the International Programme for the Development of Communication and is ready to further support the activities of this Programme through earmarked and un-earmarked contributions.

7.3 Excellencies, the ongoing pandemic revealed inequalities across the world, including gaps in education and social security. It also aggravated the gender, digital, and connectivity divides. All of these must be urgently addressed. We are ready to use effective multilateralism and UNESCO instruments to reduce inequalities, reinforce multiple sectors and global priorities during and after the pandemic.

7.4 Lithuania actively contributes to the implementation of UNESCO global priorities on gender equality and Africa. During the last 10 years Lithuania has contributed to international projects in economic, sustainability and cultural areas for developing Africa and has initiated its own. We donated humanitarian assistance for sub-Saharan Africa. Through the events of Africa week, we seek to build trust, respect and understanding between cultures.

7.5 Another significant field of our commitments through the UNESCO mandate is the protection of human rights, which cannot be ensured without gender equality. Lithuania actively promotes women empowerment, especially in education and science. We welcome inclusion of the youth element in this year's General Conference and I am glad to see Lithuanian representatives at the Youth Forum. I am convinced that young people will have many ideas and suggestions for the world they want and need. So let us hear them, understand them and do our best to create better future for them.

7.6 Dear colleagues, Lithuania continues to pay close attention to the topic of information and communication. We welcome the United Nations and UNESCO "Verified" campaign for fighting infodemia, disinformation and misinformation in the context of the pandemic. However, these phenomena are not confined to the pandemic alone; the damage they can do to our societies has a deeply harmful potential. Lithuanian NGOs Debunk EU and the Civic Resilience Initiative are working on educational activities for societal media literacy. Every year Lithuania actively participates in the events of Global Media and Information Literacy Week. In 2019, we established a UNESCO Chair on Media and Information Literacy for Inclusive Knowledge Societies at Vytautas Magnus University in Kaunas, aimed at helping to build a literate, informed, and participatory society. I invite all Member States to engage in the global campaign to uphold press freedom, universal access to information, and defend the right of journalists to report the news safely and without fear of reprisals.

7.7 Ladies and gentlemen, since UNESCO is at the frontline of the protection of tangible and intangible cultural heritage, we should implement UNESCO cultural conventions as an engine for promoting sustainable development and inclusion of local communities. It is crucial to contribute to security and building of peaceful, inclusive societies by restoring cultural objects and build back cultural life in the areas of conflict. Therefore, we wholeheartedly support and contribute to the Director-General's project "Revive the Spirit of Mosul". Lithuania also supports the global strategy for a representative, balanced and credible World Heritage List. By submitting a nomination dossier "Modernist Kaunas: Architecture of Optimism, 1919-1939" with a focus on the heritage of the modern world, we acknowledge the thematically, geographically and chronologically balanced testimony of cultural and natural properties of outstanding universal value.

7.8 Excellencies, our future is highly dependent on technological development. It is crucial to continue cooperation on implementation of the UNESCO Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence, so that it could contribute to the interest of all people, and help to achieve sustainable development goals, protection of human rights and human dignity.

7.9 Dear colleagues, only by multilateral cooperation, financial support of all Member States and common efforts regarding challenges, can we reach our goals on national and international levels. Lithuania is ready to engage with all Member States and commits to put its maximum efforts to ensure UNESCO's constructive and effective work. I thank you.

## 8. **The President:**

I thank you very much for your speech. Now I call H.E. Prof. Patrick Daouda Mouguiama, Minister of Higher Education, Scientific Research and Technology Transfer, National Education of Gabon, in charge of Civic Education.

### 9.1 **M. Mouguiama (Gabon) :**

Monsieur le Président de la Conférence générale, Monsieur le Président du Conseil exécutif, Madame la Directrice générale, Mesdames et Messieurs les Ministres, chers collègues, honorables Délégués, Mesdames et Messieurs, c'est pour moi un immense honneur et un réel plaisir de prendre la parole devant vous à l'occasion de la 41<sup>e</sup> session de la Conférence générale, Organisation des Nations Unies pour l'éducation, la science et la culture UNESCO, pour exprimer, au nom de Son Excellence Ali Bongo Ondimba, Président de la République, Chef de l'État, toute la considération et l'estime que le Gabon accorde à la coopération avec l'UNESCO.

9.2 Monsieur le Président de la Conférence générale, je voudrais au préalable vous adresser mes vives félicitations pour votre brillante élection à la présidence de cette 41<sup>e</sup> session et je saisis cette occasion pour rendre un hommage appuyé à votre prédécesseur, Son Excellence Monsieur Ahmet Altay Cengizer, pour le dynamisme et la rigueur dont il a fait preuve tout au long de son mandat.

9.3 Madame, la Directrice générale, permettez-moi, au nom de Son Excellence Ali Bongo Ondimba de vous adresser nos plus vives félicitations pour votre brillante réélection à la tête de l'UNESCO. Vous avez mené des actions fortes dans un contexte difficile qui ont rappelé, si besoin était, à quel point le monde a besoin de l'UNESCO.

9.4 Mesdames et Messieurs, le Gabon a initié un programme de réforme de son système éducatif dont le but ultime est l'adéquation formation-emploi et sa reconfiguration doit se faire nécessairement avec des outils de pilotage modernes et performants. Aussi avons-nous produit un annuaire statistique de l'éducation et commencé la réalisation du son système de gestion et de son plan sectoriel avec l'appui de l'UNESCO. Assurément, ces outils permettront de concevoir une planification efficiente pour atteindre les objectifs d'amélioration de la qualité de l'offre éducative et de l'environnement scolaire. Ils contribueront à la mise en œuvre des réformes structurelles dans tous les segments du système éducatif et l'une des plus importantes concerne l'appropriation des technologies de la communication pour l'éducation. C'est dans ce

cadre que s'inscrit le projet *Train my Generation*, qui a permis de former les jeunes Gabonais sans emploi et/ou souvent déscolarisés. Il s'agit maintenant d'étendre cette expérience aux élèves, notamment ceux de l'enseignement technique et professionnel, segment vers lequel nous orientons de plus en plus nos apprenants. En effet, ces filières, qui conduisent notamment vers les métiers du bâtiment, du bois, de l'agriculture, de la mer et des TIC, ont un fort indice d'employabilité. L'appropriation par les élèves et les enseignants des techno-pédagogies doit être l'un des objectifs majeurs de l'enseignement à distance, dont la crise de la COVID a relevé l'importance. Il ne s'agit pas d'une option, mais d'une nécessité. Aussi, la formation des formateurs dans ce domaine, qui doit accompagner nécessairement l'augmentation des structures, est-elle un défi permanent.

9.5 C'est un vaste chantier de réformes pédagogiques qui s'ouvre et elles n'atteindront pleinement leur objectif que si nous parvenons à réduire les inégalités de genre dans le système éducatif. C'est un fait que dans notre pays, la déperdition scolaire concerne davantage les filles que les garçons. Et comme on peut l'imaginer, cela s'explique en partie par les grossesses précoces et le phénomène des jeunes filles mères. C'est pourquoi l'implémentation des nouveaux programmes pour l'enseignement de l'éducation sexuelle complète est un des axes majeurs de la révision des curricula. Cela nécessite également l'implication des acteurs de la société civile, des parents d'élèves et des médias. Cette mobilisation générale est également requise pour lutter contre tous les autres fléaux qui minent le système éducatif : consommation des drogues, dépravation des mœurs, contestation de l'autorité et violences scolaires. Une véritable stratégie est nécessaire pour les juguler, dont l'enseignement de l'instruction civique est un élément essentiel. Et face aux enjeux de la préservation de la biodiversité, la redéfinition de la citoyenneté et des obligations civiques doit prendre en compte non seulement la responsabilité individuelle, mais aussi celle des États aux niveaux national et international. Instruction au civisme, à la citoyenneté ou au développement durable, tel est le programme pour reconstruire le vivre ensemble ; reconstituer le tissu social et nouer un lien plus harmonieux avec la nature.

9.6 La prise en compte du développement durable dans le cursus scolaire s'inscrit parfaitement dans le cadre de la Politique nationale de préservation de la biodiversité et de la lutte contre le réchauffement climatique. La préservation de nos écosystèmes, dont la création des parcs nationaux et des réserves marines, sont des puissants symboles, autant que la limitation de l'exploitation de la forêt, prendra aisément appui sur un système scolaire ancré dans les traditions. Nous pourrions alors déployer notre politique environnementale avec pour ambition de stocker encore plus de carbone, d'inscrire davantage de sites naturels du Gabon sur la liste du patrimoine mondial de l'UNESCO. Cette stratégie n'oppose pas la nature et la culture. Nous sommes donc sensibles au concept de « bioculture » initié par l'UNESCO et qui participe de ce mouvement d'ensemble de réconciliation de l'homme avec les autres organismes vivants et, plus généralement, avec son environnement. Ainsi, dans nos politiques publiques, la préservation de la nature va de pair avec celle de la culture. La valorisation de celle-là ne se fait pas au détriment de celle-ci, car nos sociétés ne dissocient jamais les productions culturelles de leur contexte. C'est pourquoi la politique muséale du Gabon et la valorisation de son patrimoine culturel sont conçues en tenant compte de l'ancrage de nos peuples dans la forêt ; lieu où on apprend à éviter les transgressions, à respecter les interdits, à éviter la rupture avec la nature qui annonce souvent et malheureusement le renoncement à faire société à vivre ensemble. La promotion du patrimoine culturel matériel et immatériel, ainsi que le développement des institutions culturelles et créatives mises en œuvre conformément aux conventions relatives à la culture auxquelles au Gabon est partie, se font nécessairement en respectant cet ancrage traditionnel.

9.7 Mesdames et Messieurs, les politiques publiques du Gabon ont pour finalité la justice et la paix sociale. Aussi, pour mettre fin aux inégalités de genre, le gouvernement met en œuvre le programme « Gabon-Égalité » en étroite collaboration avec la Fondation Sylvia Bongo Ondimba qui l'a initié. On parviendra alors à améliorer le statut juridique et social des femmes, l'environnement scolaire des jeunes, notamment les filles. Pour sûr, dans quelques années, le Gabon aura de nouveau fait un saut qualitatif dans la lutte contre les inégalités sociales et/ou de genre.

9.8 Mesdames et Messieurs, alors que l'UNESCO célèbre cette année ses 75 ans d'existence au service de la paix dans le monde, c'est l'occasion pour moi de lui adresser tous mes vœux et de commémorer un autre anniversaire, celui de la coopération entre le Gabon et l'UNESCO, qui dure depuis plus de 60 ans et qui sera célébré le 16 novembre 2021 au Siège de l'Organisation. Je vous remercie.

10. **The President:**

*Merci. Je remercie votre Excellence pour les gentilles paroles envers cette présidence.* Now I give the floor to H.E. Mr Milton Ribeiro, Minister of Education of Brazil.

11.1 **Mr Ribeiro (Brazil):**

Madam Director-General, Mr President of the General Conference, Ambassador Santiago Mourão, dear ministers and representatives of Member States, ladies and gentlemen. It is a singular honour for me to be here at this General Conference presiding over the Brazilian Delegation as we celebrate the 75th anniversary of UNESCO. 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. Considering that cooperation is a successful way to find answers together and to support the construction of education in this in the post-pandemic context, we believe in the role of UNESCO as a promoter of education, science, culture and information within its Member States' borders. During this 18 months of the pandemic, doctors, health professionals and scientists were the protagonists. In the post-pandemic context, the protagonists will be teachers, educational professionals and schools. Because of this, I strongly affirm the Brazilian government's commitment to overcoming all the current and historical challenges in education. In Brazil, there are more than 55 million students in the whole system of education. In this regard, the Ministry of Education has been progressively advancing in extraordinary actions.

11.2 This year a constitutional amendment allows a consistent and gradual increase in funds for the maintenance and development of a basic education. The Minister of Education is focused on measuring students' learning losses, teacher training and promoting new pedagogical tools that allow for improving the quality of teaching. Recently, the Ministry of

Education launched the assessment platform, which allows teachers and managers from public and private schools to access personalized diagnosis on elementary school students' current level of learning as well as the Creativity and Innovation Laboratory for Basic Education and the collaborative virtual learning environment, the AVAMEC platform, with hundreds of online courses encouraging teachers and managers to exchange experiences and expand new technologies and methodologies applied to education. All these actions are promoted in our priority educational policies as the national literacy policy, the Brazilian secondary education reform and the technical and vocational training education. At this opportunity, I seize the occasion to congratulate my compatriot, Ambassador Santiago Mourão, on his election as President of this session of the General Conference. Personally, only personally, as a Christian I ask the Lord Jesus to bring comfort to those who lost someone in this pandemic and pray for his blessings over all the countries, as I praise Him for being the lord and king of nations. God bless you all. Thank you very much.

**12. The President:**

I thank your Excellency for the kind words for this presidency. And now I give the floor to H.E. Ms Anna Ekström, Minister for Education of Sweden. We will watch a pre-recorded video. You have the floor, madam.

**13.1 Ms Ekström (Sweden):**

Mr President of the General Conference, Mr Chairperson of the Executive Board, Madam Director-General, distinguished delegates. It is my honour to address the 41st session of the General Conference of UNESCO and Sweden fully aligns itself with the European Union statement. I am proud to be part of a feminist government. Gender equality is at the very top of Sweden's agenda. It is a prerequisite for human rights and sustainable development. Gender equality must be at the core of UNESCO's work. UNESCO's constitution is very clear: UNESCO should protect the universal principles of justice, the rule of law and human rights. These principles are increasingly violated worldwide and Sweden counts on UNESCO to defend these principles.

13.2 Mr President, UNESCO's mandate to promote freedom of expression has never been more relevant. Freedom of expression is the foundation of democracy. Journalists, artists, authors and scientists across the world are increasingly threatened. Academic freedom is endangered and women journalists face disproportionate harassment because of their gender. Freedom of expression, artistic freedom, safety of journalists and media development are priorities for Sweden within UNESCO. As a member and chair of the International Programme for the Development of Communication's (IPDC) council we have seen tangible results in this area. Therefore, Sweden is a candidate for a second term on IPDC's council. We continue to stress that the imprisoned Swedish journalist Dawit Isaak and the Swedish book publisher Gui Minhai should be released.

13.3 Sweden is very concerned about the situation in Belarus. The respect for human rights, including freedom of expression, has rapidly deteriorated since the fraudulent elections in 2020. Mr President, Sweden's large voluntary funding to UNESCO is increasingly long-term and flexible. I urge other Member States to follow our example. Flexible financial support enabled UNESCO to respond rapidly and forcefully during the pandemic. Sweden commends UNESCO's leadership in this crisis. However, much remains to be done. Mr President, Swedish support must bring results for the people it serves. This especially includes youth, LGBTIQ persons and indigenous people. We must leave no one behind.

13.4 UNESCO must continue its efforts to strengthen its results-based management and communication. At the previous session of the General Conference, Member States approved Sweden's proposal to change UNESCO's Constitution. This was a small but important step towards a more efficient Organization. The transformation of UNESCO must continue. Sweden supports UNESCO's Draft Medium-Term Strategy and we welcome the fewer and sharper strategic goals as well as the emphasis on intersectoral collaboration. The support for a human rights-based approach was overwhelming during the negotiations of the strategy. We are pleased to see that most Member States now accept the 2030 Agenda as a common responsibility.

13.5 Mr President, education is a human right. Education is central to our efforts to build back better after the COVID-19 pandemic. Many children have been excluded from education during the pandemic. Millions of them may never return to school. UNESCO must support Member States in their efforts to ensure that these children resume their education. Providing quality education is the duty of every government. Sweden kept schools open throughout the pandemic. This was a very difficult decision. Looking back, I am convinced it was the right decision. Quality education includes comprehensive sexuality education. Sexuality education leads to better health and wellbeing for everyone. Comprehensive sexuality education is important for all genders. It is the best way to provide young people with the tools they need to stay healthy and make informed decisions. Sweden remains a major partner to UNESCO in this area through the "Our Rights, Our Lives, Our Future" programme. Education has the power to change our societies. This is why education for sustainable development is so important. Sweden commends UNESCO's efforts in this area. This work must now continue, both at the global and national levels.

13.6 Mr President, anti-Semitism is on the rise in many countries. In October this year, Sweden hosted the high-level International Forum on Holocaust Remembrance and Combating Anti-Semitism. The pledges presented will strengthen international cooperation in this area. UNESCO is for everyone, including grassroots organizations. Therefore, Sweden would like to see a greater role for civil society within UNESCO. Finally, Madam Director-General, Sweden welcomes your candidature for a second term as Director-General. The founding principles of UNESCO are as urgent as ever. Sweden remains a strong defender of multilateralism, the United Nations family and, of course, UNESCO. Thank you.

**14. The President:**

Thank you very much, your Excellency. Now I give the floor to H.E. Ms. Anne Line Wold, Minister of Education and Research of Norway.

**15.1 Ms Line Wold (Norway):**

Mr President of the General Conference, Madam Director-General, Excellencies. Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you on behalf of Norway. As one of the founding members of UNESCO, this Organization is important to Norway.

It embodies many of our core values. The first line in UNESCO's Constitution reads, "Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed." This is not a hollow phrase. UNESCO means values, core values for all of us. UNESCO values are the opportunity for all to learn to education for inclusion, to enforce critical thinking and to fight xenophobia, racism, suppression and discrimination of all sorts. UNESCO values also mean that we must carefully safeguard freedom of expression and free media, that we must fight echo chambers where hate thrives and social stigma flourishes, that we must stimulate independent and open research that let us make the decisions based on knowledge, not on alternative facts. UNESCO values states that it is worthwhile to safeguard our common culture and that it is vital we protect our planet from being destroyed. This is what UNESCO means to me and to Norway. And this is what we should never forget in our discussions. We must rise above the nitty-gritty in endless negotiations. We must keep our eyes on our common vision for a better future.

15.2 Mr President, the Sustainable Development Goals work as our stars for navigation. Norway has partnered with UNESCO to strengthen global education cooperation in order to more effectively reach the Sustainable Development Goal 4 when we fully support a new global cooperation mechanism. Education is a powerful weapon to fight social and economic inequalities, leaving no one behind. Norway is proud to co-host the second Global Disability Summit in February 2022, together with Ghana and the International Disability Alliance.

15.3 Two years ago, the General Conference adopted the Global Convention for Recognition of Higher Education Qualifications. This convention is important and I urge all countries to ratify the convention so it can enter into force. Norway has been a member of the World Heritage Committee for the last four years. The world heritage sites are unique masterpieces created by nature or mankind. We want to protect them. Please accept a friendly reminder from an outgoing member that we all have responsibility to do what we can to uphold the integrity and credibility of the lists.

15.4 Madam Director-General, the two new recommendations in science are important, timely and relevant. The ethics of artificial intelligence is important. We are all aware of how vulnerable we are in a world more and more controlled by a few high-tech companies, and we need open science to make knowledge available to all. Research paid for by the public must be fully available to the public, globally. The International Decade of Indigenous Languages is ahead of us. It is a strong commitment to save and to strengthen indigenous peoples' languages. Freedom of expression should be secured through free media, and editors and journalists need special protection.

15.5 Friends of UNESCO, Norway is a strong supporter of multilateralism and of the United Nations system. We hold the values of UNESCO high. We support UNESCO's strategic transformation and endorse the transversal approach of the Medium-Term Strategy based on a human rights approach and with a focus on gender equality and Priority Africa. As part of a voluntary Nordic practice of rotation, Norway fully supports Iceland's candidature for the Executive Board. Let me end where I started citing UNESCO's Constitution stating that peace must therefore be founded, if it is not to fail, upon the intellectual and moral solidarity of mankind. This is still a beautiful message. Thank you.

#### 16. The President:

Thank you, your Excellency. Now I give the floor to H.E. Ms. Buthaina Ali Al-Nuami, Minister of Education and Higher Education of Qatar. You have the floor, madam.

#### ١٧-١ السيدة النعمي (قطر):

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم، سعادة السيد رئيس المؤتمر العام، سعادة السيد رئيس المجلس التنفيذي، سعادة السيدة المديرية العامة لمنظمة اليونسكو، أصحاب السعادة، رؤساء وأعضاء الوفود، حضرات السيدات والسادة، يطيب لي في مستهل كلمتي أن أتقدم بالأصالة عن نفسي ونيابة عن وفد دولة قطر بالتهنئة لسعادة السيد رئيس المؤتمر العام بمناسبة انتخابه رئيساً لهذه الدورة، متمنية له التوفيق والنجاح في إدارة أعمال هذا المؤتمر.

١٧-٢ حضرات السيدات والسادة، لقد واجه العالم أجمع خلال الفترة ما بين الدورة السابقة والحالية تحدياً صحياً وتربوياً كبيراً جراء جائحة فيروس كوفيد-١٩، مما ألقى بظلاله السلبية على كافة القطاعات في العالم كله، من بينها قطاع التعليم الذي كان من أوائل القطاعات في العالم متأثراً بالإجراءات الاحترازية التي اتخذتها الحكومات في مواجهة الجائحة، ومنها إغلاق المدارس والبحث عن بدائل وطرق تعليمية تضمن استمرارية العملية التعليمية مع الحفاظ على صحة وسلامة أطراف العملية التربوية. وكان الحل في تبني التكنولوجيا الحديثة وتطبيقها في مجال التعليم. ولقد كان لدولة قطر شرف السبق في تطبيق التعليم الإلكتروني في مدارس الدولة منذ عام ٢٠١٢، أي قبل الجائحة بسنوات، لتصبح دولة قطر من أولى الدول في المنطقة التي تطبق هذا النظام الحديث، حيث يعتبر التركيز على تطوير التعليم الإلكتروني وتعزيز التحول الرقمي للبيئة التعليمية جزءاً لا يتجزأ من الخطة الاستراتيجية لوزارة التربية والتعليم العالي. وقد تمثل ذلك في وضع بني تحتية لمنصات إلكترونية، واستخدام التكنولوجيا في طرق التدريس، وتدريب المعلمين والطلبة على مهارات التعامل مع التكنولوجيا.

١٧-٣ السيدات والسادة، لقد حدد إعلان برلين الصادر عن المؤتمر العالمي للتعليم من أجل التنمية المستدامة التحديات والأولويات الأساسية والمتربطية التي يواجهها العالم اليوم، لاسيما أزمة المناخ والتعليم والإنصاف والأمن الغذائي وتمويل التنمية والبطالة وأوجه عدم المساواة والنزاعات والأزمات البيئية والاجتماعية والاقتصادية والتلوث والأمراض الوبائية والفقر المدقع، وكلها تحديات زادت وتفاقت بفعل الأزمة الناجمة عن تفشي جائحة كوفيد-١٩. وهذا يتطلب اتخاذ الإجراءات العاجلة من قبل الحكومات والمنظمات ذات الصلة للتصدي لتلك التحديات، وإجراء تحول جذري لتحقيق التنمية المستدامة التي تقوم على علاقات أكثر عدلاً وشمولاً وسلماً بين البشر، وبينهم وبين الطبيعة والبيئة.

١٧-٤ حضرات السيدات والسادة، لقد أحرزت دولة قطر تقدماً كبيراً في التعامل مع الأولويات الخمس التي وردت في إعلان برلين، وهي السياسات العامة، وتحويل بيئات التعلم، وتنمية قدرات المعلمين، وتمكين الشباب، وتسريع الإجراءات على المستوى الوطني، من خلال الإجراءات والتدابير التي اتخذتها وفق الخطة الاستراتيجية الثانية لقطاع التعليم والتدريب بالدولة ٢٠١٨-٢٠٢٢، وخطة وزارة التربية والتعليم العالي، وهما ينبثقان من رؤية قطر الوطنية ٢٠٣٠، وبلتقيان تماماً مع الأهداف التنموية وغايات الهدف ٤ والإطار العالمي بشأن التعليم من أجل التنمية المستدامة. وفي مجال التعليم العالي، شهدت دولة قطر نمواً متزايداً في أعداد

مؤسسات التعليم العالي ليصل عددها هذا العام إلى ٣٢ مؤسسة تقدم ٣٦٥ برنامجاً أكاديمياً في شتى المسارات التعليمية. كما حققت قطر نمواً مضطرباً في عدد مؤسسات البحث العلمي ومراكزه، حتى وصل عددها إلى ٣٣ مركزاً ومؤسسة، تتنوع اهتماماتها بين موضوعات البيئة، والطاقة، والطب، وريادة الأعمال والحوسبة، والدراسات الاجتماعية والإنسانية والتربوية، والابتكارات التكنولوجية، والتنمية المستدامة. وفي مجال التراث والثقافة جاء اختيار مدينة الدوحة عاصمة للثقافة الإسلامية في المنطقة العربية، ليكون ذلك حدثاً تاريخياً سلط الأضواء على دولة قطر. وجاء انضمام ثلاث بلديات قطرية إلى شبكة اليونسكو العالمية لمدن التعلم تحقيقاً لغايات الهدفين ٤ و ١١ من أهداف التنمية المستدامة. كما أدرجت مدينة الدوحة ضمن شبكة اليونسكو العالمية للمدن المبدعة في مجال التصميم. وفي مجال البيئة اتخذت الدولة عدة إجراءات من بينها اعتماد استراتيجية قطر الوطنية للبيئة والتغير المناخي.

١٧-٥ حضرات السيدات والسادة، إن دولة قطر حريصة دائماً على الالتزام بمبادئ ومواثيق منظومة الأمم المتحدة وما يصدر عنها من قوانين وتوصيات، بل وتعمل على تعزيز ودعم التعاون والشراكة الدولية والإقليمية لتنفيذ تلك القوانين وطنياً ودولياً. كما أن الدولة لا تتوانى في تقديم المساعدات الإنسانية والإنمائية لمواجهة التحديات والنزاعات التي يشهدها العالم اليوم، والتي تستهدف حقوق الإنسان في العديد من دول العالم. وقد أكد سمو أمير البلاد المفدى في كلمته الأخيرة أمام الجمعية العامة للأمم المتحدة أن رهان قطر على المؤسسات الدولية والتعاون المتعدد الأطراف هو رهان استراتيجي، مشدداً على مواصلة الإسهام في وكالات الأمم المتحدة والوفاء بتعهدات قطر في القضايا التي حددها المجتمع الدولي. كما أعرب سمو الأمير في كلمته عن سعادته بأن تكون الدوحة عاصمة للعمل الدولي المتعدد الأطراف في منطقتنا التي هي في أمس الحاجة لعمل وجهود وكالات الأمم المتحدة والمؤسسات الدولية التي بدأت مكاتبها في العمل بالدوحة، وذلك مع قرب افتتاح بيت الأمم المتحدة.

١٧-٦ وفي الختام أتمنى لمؤتمرننا هذا التوفيق والنجاح وتحقيق الأهداف المرجوة من انعقاده، ونهنئ سعادة السيدة أودري أزولاي، المديرية العامة لمنظمة اليونسكو، على تجديد الثقة لها، وشكري وتقديري لكم على حسن استماعكم.

#### 18. **The President:**

Thank you, your excellency. Now I call H.E. Mr. Nguema Onguene Clemente Engonga, Minister for Education, University Teaching and Sports of Equatorial Guinea.

#### 19.1 **Sr. Clemente Engonga (Guinea Ecuatorial):**

Excelentísimo señor Presidente, excelentísimo señor Presidente del Consejo Ejecutivo, excelentísima señora Directora General de la UNESCO, excelencias, señoras y señores: la delegación de Guinea Ecuatorial, que tengo el honor de presidir, se siente honrada de estar aquí en representación de nuestro país, ya que Guinea Ecuatorial comparte los principios e ideales que animaron la fundación de la UNESCO, como es la paz, la justicia y la igualdad entre todos los hombres.

19.2 Nuestra condición de miembro de esta prestigiosa Organización internacional nos interpela a asumir estos principios y valores que sostienen la razón de ser de la UNESCO. Por ello, agradecemos a los Estados Miembros y a la Directora General por colocar a África como una de las prioridades mundiales de la UNESCO y disponer a su Secretaría para trabajar con dichos Estados.

19.3 Con el propósito de conseguir los objetivos del Programa Prioridad África, la UNESCO, los Estados Miembros y asociados deben seguir consintiendo la asignación de suficiente recursos económicos y humanos, así como seguir fortaleciendo las alianzas con instituciones públicas y privadas.

19.4 Ilustre auditorio: antes de proseguir con esta intervención, queremos aprovechar este momento singular para rendir un justo homenaje a todas las víctimas y profesionales de salud, cuyas vidas heroicamente se han truncado con la muerte en su lucha contra el nocivo coronavirus, la COVID-19 y todas sus variantes. Una pandemia que está dejando familias destrozadas y muchas lágrimas en todos los países y regiones del mundo.

19.5 El deseo del Gobierno y el pueblo de Guinea Ecuatorial es ver algún día la vuelta a la normalidad con la ilusión y la esperanza de que la humanidad recobre su vitalidad, dinamismo y confianza que el desastroso coronavirus nos ha arrebatado.

19.6 Creemos que es bueno que se mantenga el espíritu que animó la creación de la UNESCO, caracterizado por su contribución al mantenimiento de la paz entre las naciones, el desarrollo del conocimiento y comprensión mutua. Para ello, invitamos a la comunidad científica mundial, para que con su saber hacer, busquen toda forma de eliminar la invasión de la pandemia que hoy aniquila cada vez más seres humanos.

19.7 La UNESCO debe continuar intensificando su asistencia técnica y el intercambio de buenas prácticas en todos los ámbitos de su competencia para ayudar a los Estados africanos a cumplir la Agenda 2063 de la Unión Africana, así como la Agenda 2030 de las Naciones Unidas, se debe seguir estableciendo un mecanismo de seguimiento de ejecución del presupuesto, sus informes y evaluación.

19.8 Señoras y señores, en relación a los lineamientos que preceden, Guinea Ecuatorial y la UNESCO están desarrollando un vasto programa de cooperación en áreas de educación superior, desarrollo de la calidad educativa, de sistemas de información educativa y proyectos para el desarrollo cultural.

19.9 Reiteramos nuestro reconocimiento a la UNESCO y a todos los países miembros de esta prestigiosa Organización por la institucionalización del Premio Guinea Ecuatorial-UNESCO, cuya sexta edición y entrega tendrá lugar en la sede de esta Organización el próximo año 2022, cuya fecha será fijada por la UNESCO. Nos gustaría contar con el calor de la presencia de cada delegación en el acto de entrega de dicho premio.

19.10 El Gobierno de Guinea Ecuatorial expresa su más profundo agradecimiento y reconocimiento a todos y a cada uno de los países miembros de la UNESCO, cuyas delegaciones acertadamente apoyaron sin reservas la candidatura de



Guinea Ecuatorial al prestigioso puesto de Presidente del Consejo Ejecutivo en el bienio que termina, así como por el apoyo que le han brindado durante el ejercicio de su mandato, que sabiamente ha culminado con éxito.

19.11 Dirigimos nuestro justo reconocimiento y saluciones al Presidente de esta 41ª Conferencia de la UNESCO por su elección y la forma acertada en que está dirigiendo los debates de esta Conferencia.

19.12 Nuestras felicitaciones se dirigen también a la Directora General de la UNESCO por su reconducción y los esfuerzos que realiza para cambiar la visión y la práctica basada en la renovación estratégica y funcionamiento de la UNESCO.

19.13 Como Estado saliente del Consejo Ejecutivo, expresamos nuestro agradecimiento por la colaboración de los demás miembros con los que hemos trabajado, a la par que aprovechamos en felicitar con antelación a los Estados que serán próximamente elegidos, así como al próximo Presidente de dicho órgano rector de nuestra Organización. Al actual Presidente del Consejo Ejecutivo y su equipo, manifestamos nuestra admiración, satisfacción y reconocimiento por un trabajo dinámico y excelente desempeñado durante un periodo económico y sanitario difícil a nivel mundial.

19.14 Por último, expresamos nuestro sentimiento de respeto, deseo de paz y prosperidad a todos los miembros y jefes de delegaciones presentes en esta Conferencia para que la UNESCO sea cada vez más grande, próspera y luchadora para el bienestar del mundo. Muchas gracias.

20. **The President:**

*Gracias su excelencia, gracias por las gentiles palabras hacia esta Presidencia.* I call now H.E. Hon. Dr. Douglas Letsholathebe, Minister of Tertiary Education, Research, Science and Technology of Botswana. You have the floor, sir.

21.1 **Mr Letsholathebe (Botswana):**

Mr President, Madam Director-General, Excellencies. Good morning to you all. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak and represent my country, Botswana, at this esteemed Conference. Mr President, Botswana would like to join other Member States in congratulating you on your election to the presidency of the 41st session of the General Conference of UNESCO and wish you success in conducting the proceedings of this important session. We would also like to congratulate the Director-General for her reappointment and wish you well too.

21.2 During the UNESCO Medium-Term Strategy for 2014-2021, Botswana developed an education and training sector strategic plan (ETSSP) which builds on Botswana's performance and the six areas of education for all goals and activities related to the Millennium Development Goals. The ETSSP is aligned to the Education 2030 Agenda and its main aim is to improve access, quality, inclusion and equity, accountability and governance in the education system.

21.3 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 for tertiary education it remains slightly lower at 25% due to limited funding. We are now reviewing the Education Act and developing national education policies and plans to advance e-education, inclusive education, learning pathways, language policies and many more. The expected results of our domesticated UNESCO Programme and Budget for 2020-2021 are becoming a reality, and we will continue to do more so that we do not leave anybody behind.

21.4 Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, for sustainable development as well as the promotion of sustainable livelihoods, there is a need for UNESCO to continue building capacities for its Member States to design effective science policies, as well as build capacity in the technology landscape, including putting more emphasis on indigenous knowledge systems.

21.5 Botswana also supports the move towards a standard-setting instrument on open science and activities that supports girls and women in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). The STEM Festival is held annually, while the Research and Innovation Symposium is held every two years in order to build awareness on STEM. Botswana is in the process of establishing a national fund for research, while the innovation fund has been running for a few years now. Regarding the 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 Botswana female Ph.D students were awarded the Prize.

21.6 Mr President, Botswana notes with regret that climate change remains one of our greatest challenges the world is facing. As such, there is need for us, all of us – I must emphasize – to show our commitment to addressing this global challenge by developing a clear mitigation strategy that will form part of the next UNESCO Medium-Term Strategy for 2022-2029.

21.7 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 budgetary frameworks that protect and support the development of the creative industry. The establishment of the Botswana National Arts Council in 2021 will regulate and optimize the potential of the creative sector for economic benefit. In addition, the National Strategy for the Creative Arts Industries prioritizes research, training and knowledge transfer. Botswana has planned the establishment of a 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 industry.

21.8 Botswana is one of the Member States that continues to enjoy the benefits of UNESCO's Priority Africa as it receives financial and technical support from the UNESCO Participation Programme to conduct essential capacity building for border officials in combating illicit trafficking on cultural property, as well as the protection of cultural property in the event of conflict. Botswana commits to the implementation of the new UNESCO Medium-Term Strategy for 2022-2029, and the Draft Programme and Budget for 2022-2025, which are aligned to the Agenda 2030. In conclusion, Mr President, Botswana has deemed it appropriate to propose to this General Conference, its commitment to further serve UNESCO by

becoming a member of UNESCO's Executive Board. Botswana will therefore be one of the candidates for the Board during the election on 17 November 2021 and we are appealing to you for your support at this point in time. Thank you very much.

**22. The President:**

Thank you, your Excellency. I call H.E. Mr Moustapha Mohamed Mahamoud, Minister of Education and Vocational Training of Djibouti.

**23.1 M. Mahamoud (Djibouti) :**

Monsieur le Président de la Conférence générale, Madame la Directrice générale, Monsieur le Président du Conseil exécutif, Excellences, distingués invités, Mesdames et Messieurs, bonjour, je ne saurais commencer donc mon intervention sans d'abord féliciter notre Directrice générale, Audrey Azoulay, pour sa brillante réélection hier par la Conférence générale, confirmant ainsi le vote du Conseil exécutif. Ce plébiscite témoigne, si besoin en était, de l'unanimité de la famille de l'UNESCO pour vous renouveler sa confiance, pour continuer votre mission et mener notre organisation à bon port, au moment où nous célébrons son 75<sup>e</sup> anniversaire. Alors que le contexte sanitaire à l'échelle mondiale demeure préoccupant, organiser le 41<sup>e</sup> Conférence générale ici à Paris en dit long sur la détermination des dirigeants de l'UNESCO à mener à bien les activités de l'Organisation, à partager avec les acteurs, ceux qui traduisent en actes la vision de l'UNESCO, les priorités du moment et les orientations toutes basées sur les remontées d'informations, mais surtout à envoyer un signal fort à ceux qui seraient en proie au doute et au fatalisme. Travailler sur des problématiques aussi centrales et incontournables que la paix et la dissémination des valeurs comme la tolérance, le dialogue interculturel, l'importance du vivre ensemble, le développement durable et collectif dans le cœur et l'esprit des Hommes, notamment des jeunes, qui constituent une formidable caisse de résonance, exige bien sûr une mobilisation de tous les instants, et ce, face à n'importe quelle situation.

23.2 Notre rencontre ici au Siège est également une occasion pour donner un souffle nouveau à notre Organisation qui en a besoin plus que jamais, eu égard aux restrictions sanitaires imposées par ce virus inattendu qui a pris de court les épidémiologistes et les scientifiques et qui a plongé le monde dans une situation anxiogène sans précédent parce que sanitaire incontrôlée et économiquement catastrophique. Je profite de cette tribune pour affirmer sans ambages que l'UNESCO a fait face à cette crise qui a chamboulé nos habitudes et nos modes de travail, de la manière la plus professionnelle et la plus efficace qui soit. Je n'aurai pas le temps si j'essayais donc ici d'énumérer toutes les actions de notre belle Organisation en faveur de l'éducation, de la culture et de la science, en faveur de l'homme tout simplement.

23.3 L'UNESCO n'a pas hésité à exploiter toutes ses ressources, à mobiliser tous les acteurs et ce pour se donner les moyens pour répondre aux besoins exprimés par les pays et les ONG. Mieux, l'UNESCO, dans sa volonté de s'adapter aux bouleversements technologiques du monde, joue un rôle de premier plan dans la problématique de l'intelligence artificielle et de son éthique, thématique à l'ordre du jour lors de la 41<sup>e</sup> Conférence générale.

23.4 La République de Djibouti, à l'instar des autres pays du monde a pris toutes les précautions pour que cette pandémie provoque le moins de dégâts possibles. En matière d'éducation, le Ministère de l'Éducation nationale et de la Formation professionnelle a assuré la continuité pédagogique pendant les confinements en s'appuyant sur les TIC et la télévision nationale. Certes, la situation a quelque peu, quelque peu déstabilisé la communauté éducative et en premier lieu l'enseignant qui a dû faire preuve d'ingéniosité, même si les TIC auraient une place non négligeable dans les enseignements/apprentissages et dans nos curricula, situation face à laquelle nos élèves se sont également adaptés en apprenant autrement, via des plates-formes de classes virtuelles, la télévision, la radio. Le Ministère de l'Éducation nationale et de la Formation professionnelle a réussi, dans des délais records, à concevoir et à mettre en œuvre un programme scolaire complet à l'adresse des élèves. Nous disposons des moyens qui leur permettent de suivre à distance les apprentissages. Nous sommes très fiers des efforts consentis par l'État, mais surtout des professionnels de l'éducation qui ont su s'adapter très rapidement. Effort qui se poursuit pour pérenniser ces dispositifs et réduire la fracture numérique qui persiste. La problématique de la résilience des systèmes éducatifs devient donc un volet qui s'ajoute aux impératifs de qualité et d'inclusivité.

23.5 Dans le domaine de la culture, la mise en œuvre de la politique nationale culturelle qui s'appuie sur la Bibliothèque et Archives nationales et autres structures en charge de la culture, demeure le projet du moment. À l'enseignement supérieur, l'accès et la qualité des prestations et services des structures qui sont rattachées ne cessent de répondre donc aux besoins de notre jeunesse, avide de connaissances et animée d'une réelle volonté de participer au développement du pays. La Coalition mondiale pour l'Éducation de l'UNESCO nous a été d'un grand secours puisque les échanges et les partages d'expériences et les aides multiformes nous ont permis de nous appuyer sur les expériences des uns et des autres. Un an et demi après le début de la pandémie et la fermeture des écoles, nous nous sentons plus forts, mieux organisés et déterminés plus que jamais à trouver des solutions alternatives et pérennes en cas de fermeture des établissements scolaires.

23.6 Monsieur le Président de la Conférence générale, qu'il me soit également permis, du haut de cette tribune, de remercier au nom de la République de Djibouti, la Directrice générale de l'UNESCO, Madame Azoulay, qui nous a honoré de sa visite et de sa présence lors de la Foire internationale de l'édition des manuels scolaires à Djibouti, en février 2021. Cette visite, Madame la Directrice générale, nous a permis de booster la coopération multisectorielle entre la République de Djibouti et l'UNESCO et a donné un coup d'accélérateur à nos activités en faveur de l'éducation, la culture et la science. Soyez en remerciée. Votre volonté de laisser aux générations futures un monde, notre volonté, pardon, de laisser aux générations futures un monde plus juste, plus développé, plus durable, passe donc par la coopération et le partage d'expériences, tout en respectant les valeurs intrinsèques liées aux cultures et aux modes de vie spécifiques, et l'un n'exclut pas l'autre.

23.7 Je souhaite rappeler ici que mon pays est candidat au Conseil exécutif au sein du groupe Afrique 5, des élections qui se tiendront bien sûr le 25 novembre et souhaite, souhaiterait apporter donc sa modeste contribution à notre Organisation et à la prise des décisions. Par avance, nous voulons remercier ensemble l'ensemble des États membres

pour leur soutien qu'ils viendront bien sûr apporter à notre candidature. Pour terminer, j'adresse encore une fois mes félicitations et mes remerciements aux organisateurs de la 41<sup>e</sup> Conférence générale de l'UNESCO et en particulier à la Directrice générale. Je vous remercie de votre attention.

#### 24. The President:

*Merci beaucoup.* I give the floor now to Mr Mussa Mohamed Mahmud Hamad, Minister of Education of Libya.  
You have the floor, sir.

١-٢٥ السيد محمد (ليبيا):

السيد رئيس المؤتمر العام، السيد رئيس المجلس التنفيذي، السيدة المديرية العامة لمنظمة اليونسكو، أصحاب السعادة رؤساء وأعضاء الوفود المشاركين، كلكم بصفته ومقامه نجيبكم بتحية الإسلام، السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته، أزول فلأول، إنه لمن دواعي سروري أن أقف أمام هذا التجمع الدولي المهم لأمتل دولة ليبيا شعباً وحكومة، وكلني فخر واعتزاز بعمق العلاقات التي تربطنا بالمنظمة الدولية للتربية والعلم والثقافة، اليونسكو، منذ انضمامنا إليها في عام ١٩٥٣. ويسرني أن أتقدم بالتهنئة إلى السيد سانتياغو إراسبال موررو على انتخابه لرئاسة المؤتمر العام في دورته الحادية والأربعين، متمنين له التوفيق. كما لا يفوتني أن أتقدم بالشكر لرئيس الدورة الأربعين للمؤتمر العام على جهوده المتميزة خلال العامين الماضيين. ونهنئ السيدة أودري أزولاي لانتخابها لولاية ثانية، متمنين لها التوفيق.

٢-٢٥ أيها الحضور الكريم، تشهد بلادي اليوم جهوداً واستعدادات مكثفة وسط تأييد شعبي ودولي لخوض تجربة طموحة نسعى جميعاً من خلالها إلى ترسيخ مبدأ التداول السلمي للسلطة عبر قيام دولة مدنية ملتزمة بالنهج الديمقراطي الحقيقي في جميع مناحي الحياة.

٣-٢٥ حضرات السيدات والسادة، لقد واجهت بلادي، مثل العديد من الدول، نتائج وتداعيات تفشي جائحة كورونا، فأتخذنا جملة من الإجراءات الاحترازية والوقائية في مؤسساتنا التعليمية بفضل الجهود الوطنية في وزارة التربية والتعليم، والوزارات والهيئات ذات العلاقة، واستطعنا تسهيل العملية التعليمية واستمرارها بالتنسيق مع المنظمات الإقليمية والدولية، وعلى رأسها منظمة اليونسكو. ولقد كان التنسيق كاملاً في متابعة تطور ومكافحة تفشي جائحة كورونا متزامناً مع الوضع والخطط والاستراتيجيات لضمان استمرار العملية التعليمية في مناخ صحي لجميع المنتسبين إليها في ليبيا.

٤-٢٥ معالي السيدات والسادة وأعضاء الوفد، مما لا شك فيه أن للعملية التربوية والتعليمية دور مهم في بناء البلدان وتطورها، وهي العمود الفقري لأي تنمية شاملة مستدامة تتطلب استقراراً حقيقياً على كافة الأصعدة السياسية والاقتصادية والاجتماعية، وهذا ما تصبو إليه بلادي ليبيا. ولم نفتأ شعبها بجميع مكوناته في البحث عن ذلك الاستقرار المنشود. وفي المقابل رأينا تدخلاً ودعماً لأطراف داخلية على حساب أطراف أخرى قد انعكس ذلك على جميع المبادرات الوطنية، وبالأخص تلك المبادرات التي تُعنى بمجال التربية والثقافة والعلوم. وإننا نشاهد الجميع للوقوف على مسافة واحدة من جميع الأطراف لمساعدة ليبيا في التحول إلى المسار الديمقراطي الحقيقي، ودعم شعبها في استقراره واستقرار أبنائه على كراسي العلم والتعلم، فهم الحصن الحصين لبناء غد أفضل.

٥-٢٥ أيها السادة الحضور، نحن نعلم أن الدول التي تمر بفترة من النزاعات والضعف في الجوانب الأمنية تعاني من تدهور موروثها الثقافي وتعرضه للخطر. وقد لا يخفى على الكثير منكم بأن بلادي ليبيا لديها خمسة مواقع، مسجلة على قائمة اليونسكو للتراث العالمي، تمثل إرثاً للإنسانية، وهي الآن موضوعة على قائمة التراث العالمي المعرض للخطر منذ عدة سنوات. وتسعى بلادي جاهدة بمساعدة المنظمات الدولية والإقليمية والشركاء لإخراجها من تلك القائمة من خلال اتخاذ كافة التدابير والتوصيات التي أصدرتها المنظمة ولجنتها للتراث العالمي التي نشكرها على دعمها اللامحدود، والتي شملت بعض أعمال الصيانة والصون والحفظ وبعض الإجراءات التي تعزز الأمن والسلامة. كما حرصت السلطات الوطنية على تقديم التقارير الرسمية الدورية عن حالة هذه المواقع إلى الجهات المختصة بالمنظمة لمناقشتها واتخاذ الخطوات والإجراءات اللازمة لرفعها من قائمة التراث العالمي المعرض للخطر. وقد اتخذت إجراءات تصحيحية عميقة من شأنها إزالة مدينة غدامس القديمة، مدينة الحضارات والتعايش السلمي وازدهار الثقافات، من قائمة التراث العالمي المعرض للخطر في المستقبل القريب. ولقد عانت بلادي من الخطر الداهم والمتمثل في نقل الممتلكات الثقافية بطريقة شرعية سواء بقصد الإتجار بها أو بقصد العبث بتراتها وممتلكاتها الثقافية. وبفضل جهود المخلصين، وبالتعاون الكامل مع المنظمات الإقليمية والدولية، استطعنا استرجاع بعض هذه الممتلكات التي تمثل حضارتنا العتيقة والتليدة. ولا ننكر مساعدة الدول التي أرجعتها لنا طوعاً، إيماناً منها بأن الأمن في بلادي لم يعد يشكل هاجساً يثير القلق. وإيماناً منا بأهمية المحافظة على التراث الثقافي غير المادي وحمايته، فقد وافقت السلطات التنفيذية في بلادي على اتفاقية حماية التراث الثقافي غير المادي لعام ٢٠٠٣، والجهود تبذل من أجل التصديق النهائي على الاتفاقية من جانب السلطات التنفيذية.

٦-٢٥ أيها الجمع الكريم، في مجال حرية الصحافة وأمن الصحفيين، حققت بلادي في السنوات الأخيرة تقدماً نسبياً رغم بعض الحوادث والتجاوزات، التي تم السيطرة عليها في السنوات الأخيرة. وشهدت الصحافة والإعلام تحسناً ملحوظاً، كما أبرزته عدة تقارير وطنية ودولية تجسد التطور الإيجابي في دور الصحافة والإعلام ومساندته لمسار التحول الديمقراطي في البلاد.

٧-٢٥ السيدات والسادة الحاضرين، إن عالمنا اليوم هو يسابق الزمن لتحقيق الأهداف والغايات لخطة التنمية المستدامة لعام ٢٠٣٠ التي أقرتها الأمم المتحدة في عام ٢٠١٥، والتي تشتمل على ١٧ هدفاً، تغطي جميع مناحي الحياة الاجتماعية والاقتصادية والبيئية. وقد حظيت منظمة اليونسكو بشرف قيادة الجهود المبذولة لتحقيق غايات ومقاصد الهدف ٤ من أهداف التنمية المستدامة وهو التعليم، والمناطق به تحقيق التعليم الجيد والمنصف للجميع مدى الحياة. فقد انخرطت دولة ليبيا كالعديد من دول العالم في جهود موافقة لسياساتها وخططها في شتى المجالات مع الأهداف والغايات النبيلة لخطة التنمية المستدامة لعام ٢٠٣٠، حتى يتسنى لبلادي المساهمة في الحد من تأثير التغير المناخي وصون وحماية البيئة. وفي هذا الصدد، نشير إلى أن ليبيا قد وقعت على اتفاق باريس بشأن المناخ لعام ٢٠١٥، وقد تم المصادقة عليها من حكومة الوحدة الوطنية ومجلس النواب خلال عام ٢٠٢١. وما زلنا نطمح لمزيد من التعاون والتنسيق مع منظمة اليونسكو والشركاء الإقليميين والدوليين لرص الصفوف والاستفادة من تجارب الدول والمجتمعات لتسريع الوصول للغايات والمقاصد.

٨-٢٥ أيها السيدات والسادة، في الختام يسرني أن أتوجه بجزيل الشكر وعظيم الامتنان إلى أسرة المنظمة بقطاعاتها المختلفة على جهودها في إعداد وثيقة مشروع البرنامج والميزانية لفترة العامين القادمين الذي جاء نتيجة لمشاورات مكثفة أجرتها منظمنا مع العديد من الدول الأعضاء والمنظمات الحكومية وغير الحكومية. وختاماً، أتمنى لكم جميعاً التوفيق والسداد، والسلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته.

**26. The President:**

Thank you very much your Excellency. Now I will give the floor to H.E. Dr Radzi Jidin, Senior Minister of Education of Malaysia. It is a pre-recorded video that we will watch right now. Thank you. You have the floor, sir.

**27.1 Mr Jidin (Malaysia):**

Mr President of the General Conference, Mr Chairperson of the Executive Board, Madam Director-General, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen. On behalf of the Government of Malaysia, I would like to express my sincere gratitude for the opportunity to speak to UNESCO today. It is also my honour to congratulate Mr President on your election to lead the 41st session of UNESCO's General Conference. I would also like to record my appreciation to Ambassador Altay Cengizer for his commitment and immense contributions as president of the previous session.

27.2 Ladies and gentlemen, across the world we have all experienced massive destruction to our education systems due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Nevertheless, the crisis has become an inflection point for the world to embrace changes to education delivery methods. Malaysia has adapted to various delivery modes to ensure that our students are not left behind. We have also formulated strategies to bring back all learners to schools safely as the country prepares to enter the endemic phase. In order to better adapt to future disruptions and embrace technologic advances, Malaysia is currently formulating a framework that focuses on enhancing students' mastery of digital technology and enriching the quality of video content in teaching and learning. This framework will also include enhancing teachers' competencies as well as cultivating the use of digital technology among educational leaders with the goal of fully optimizing the digital ecosystem and bridging the digital divide.

27.3 In addition, Malaysia is currently finalizing the national Inclusive Open Educational Resource policy (IOER). The formulation of this policy is in line with UNESCO's effort in establishing inclusive OER to enable all learners, particularly those with disabilities. It provides the opportunity for students with disabilities to learn according to their individual learning preference and style. This will result in improved learning experiences, hence greater employment opportunities for those with disabilities.

27.4 Ladies and gentlemen, Malaysia wishes to voice our support for the Draft Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence (AI). The initiative is very timely and of paramount importance to ensure that AI technologies are developed with clear ethical standards, which respects human dignity and human rights. The COVID-19 outbreak has also driven Malaysia to speed up the development of Malaysia's Open Science Platform (MOSP). It is a strategic, transformative initiative to strengthen the science, technology and innovation collaborative ecosystem for Malaysia. The MOSP enables accessibility and sharing of research data, as well as publication and reports produced by Malaysian scientists, including those related to COVID-19.

27.5 Ladies and gentlemen, misinformation concerning COVID-19 has become an infodemic. As a vice-chair of the UNESCO Information for All Programme (IFAP) Bureau, Malaysia holds the key to the principles and guidelines set by IFAP in addressing the surge of misinformation and aims to promote better media literacy. Besides this effort, despite the grim situation caused by the pandemic, we are resolute in upholding our responsibilities to safeguard the treasures of biodiversity. In September 2021, Penang Hill in Malaysia has been listed in the World Network of Biosphere Reserves, (WNBR) under UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Programme. We are also proud that in December 2020, the joint nomination of Pantun by Malaysia and Indonesia, as well as the Wangchuan Festival by Malaysia and China, have both succeeded and are recognized as part of UNESCO's intangible cultural heritage of humanity. These concerted efforts reflect the multilateralism practised among Member States.

27.6 Ladies and gentlemen, we stand firm that UNESCO and Member States must forge strong partnerships and adopt a whole society approach to ensure UNESCO stays relevant. We shall inculcate the values of inclusivity, common ground and contentment that will propel us in our aspiration to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. On that note, I thank you.

**28. The President:**

Thank you very much for your speech. Now I give the floor to H.E. Mr. Fethi Sellaouti, Minister of Education of Tunisia.

١-٢٩ السيد السلاوي (تونس):

السيد رئيس المؤتمر العام، السيد رئيس المجلس التنفيذي، السيدة المديرية العامة، أصحاب المعالي والسعادة، رؤساء الوفود، السيدات والسادة، يسعدني في مستهل كلمتي أن أعبر باسم الجمهورية التونسية وباسمي الخاص عن خالص التهنية إلى السيد رئيس المؤتمر، راجياً له التوفيق في مهمته. ويطيب لي أن أتقدم إلى السيدة أودري أزولاي بأجمل عبارات التهنية وأصدق الأمان على الثقة التي حظيت بها من الدول الأعضاء بتجديد انتخابها مديرة عامة لمنظمة اليونسكو لمدة ثانية، وأن أعرب لها عن تمنياتنا الخالصة بالتوفيق في مهامها. ولا بد في هذا المقام من التنويه بما أنجزته السيدة المديرية العامة من جليل الأعمال لتحويل طاقات المنظمة إلى برامج واقعية، وبما برهنت عليه من قدرة على تطوير الأداء والتعامل مع التحديات والمتغيرات، مؤكداً مواصلة دعم بلادي لنهجها الإصلاحي وتحديثه.

٢-٢٩ السيدات والسادة، ينعقد مؤتمرا هذا واليونسكو تحيي الذكرى الخامسة والسبعين لتأسيسها لتندرس إنجازات هذه المنظمة العريقة ومستقبل عملها وتوجهاتها، في ظل وضع عالمي سريع التغير وكثير التعقيد ومتعدد المشاكل والتهديدات التنمائية للأمن والسلام. وإن تراكمات خلل الأوضاع الاقتصادية والاجتماعية والبيئية والصحية أثرت على المنظومة الاقتصادية الدولية على مختلف المستويات. وليس لنا أمام هذا الوضع المعقد من خيار سوى رفع التحديات عبر الالتزام بالنهج

التنموي المتعدد الأطراف، الذي يتجلى من خلال أهداف التنمية المستدامة التي أعلنتها الأمم المتحدة، ودعم اليونسكو وتعزيز عملها عن طريق الاضطلاع بالمهمة المسندة إليها ووظائفها المحددة في الاستراتيجية المتوسطة الأجل، وكذلك إمدادها بالإمكانيات التي تتيح لها مساعدة الدول الأعضاء على تنفيذ خطة التنمية المستدامة في أفق عام ٢٠٣٠ وما بعده.

٢٩-٣ حضرات السيدات والسادة، إن المتمتعين في مشروع البرنامج والميزانية للفترة ٢٠٢٢-٢٠٢٣ يلاحظ أن مجالات عمل اليونسكو النابعة من أصالة روح القيم التي أسست لدستورها تمثل خطوة جديدة هامة، وفرصة ليس مسموحاً للمجتمع الدولي أن يفوتها لتدارك الأوضاع من أجل تحقيق تربية جيدة شاملة ومنصفة للجميع مدى الحياة، وبناء مجتمع المعرفة، وجعل البعد الثقافي مكوناً أساسياً للتنمية الشاملة والمستدامة، وربط العلوم والتكنولوجيات بمتطلبات التنمية.

٢٩-٤ ونحن مدركون أن ما تتيحه مخططات اليونسكو وبرامجها في مجال التربية كفيل بأن يعزز تفاعلنا بتحقيق هذه الأهداف الاستراتيجية. كما تدعو تونس منظمنا إلى الانكباب بجدية على ظاهرة العنف المتسرب إلى مدارسنا والمسلسل على العائلة التربوية بما فيها الأساتذة والمعلمين. وسمحوا لي، سيداتي وسادتي، من هذا المنبر أن أطلق نداء في شكل اقتراح حملة وطنية ودولية للتصدي للعنف والتعصب والتطرف الذي يسود العديد من مؤسساتنا التربوية في مختلف بلداننا، وذلك لخلق جيل متسامح ومتعاون من أجل النماء والازدهار.

٢٩-٥ أما في مجال العلوم الطبيعية، فإننا نتمن ونندعم برامج اليونسكو الرامية إلى النهوض بالبحث العلمي وتقليص الفجوة المعرفية بين الدول، وبلورة أفضل الممارسات لمساعدة الدول الأعضاء على إحكام الربط بين اكتساب المعارف العلمية وتقاسمها وربطها بمتطلبات التنمية المستدامة.

٢٩-٦ وأما بالنسبة إلى مجال العلوم الاجتماعية والإنسانية الذي تنفرد به اليونسكو، فإننا ندعو إلى دعم البرامج الرامية إلى تعميق فهم الانعكاسات الاقتصادية والاجتماعية لما يشهده العالم من تغيرات وتحويلات اقتصادية واجتماعية متسارعة النسق. كما ندعو المنظمة من منطلق رسالتها المتمثلة في بناء حصون السلام في عقول البشر إلى تعزيز مساهمتها في دعم المسار الديمقراطي والمساواة بين الجنسين والحوار بين الشعوب والثقافات.

٢٩-٧ حضرات السيدات والسادة، لقد أكدت تونس، بما اتخذته من إجراءات حازمة لحماية تراثها الثقافي والطبيعي واللامادي وبالتفقيات الدولية التي صادقت عليها، التزامها الكامل بالمبادئ الأساسية النابعة من الميثاق التأسيسي للمنظمة. وإذ نتمن جهود المنظمة المبدولة في سبيل تحقيق الأهداف الرامية إلى سد الفجوة الرقمية وتمكين المجتمعات النامية من تملك تكنولوجيا المعلومات والاتصال وتوظيفها وفق حاجاتها التربوية والتنمية، فإننا نسعى إلى مواصلة الانخراط في برنامج المنظمة واستراتيجياتها المعروضة على مؤتمراتنا، والرامية إلى العناية بمسألة الذكاء الاصطناعي وتنمية القدرات وتحسين الممارسات في مختلف المجالات التنموية. كما تشرف تونس بدورها بالتنسيق للفريق العلمي المتعدد الأطراف الذي يضم ثمان دول لدراسة وحماية التراث المغمور بالمياه في موقع قناة سكيكري على الجرف القاري التونسي، وهي التجربة الطلابية في إطار اتفاقية اليونسكو لعام ٢٠٠١ بشأن حماية التراث الثقافي المغمور بالمياه.

٢٩-٨ السيد الرئيس، حضرات السيدات، لا بد في هذا المقام من التعبير عن مساندة تونس الكاملة لقضية الشعب الفلسطيني وطموحه لبناء دولة ذات سيادة تحقق لأبنائها مطالبهم المشروعة في التعليم والثقافة وفي الحياة الديمقراطية الحرة. ويسعدني في الختام أن أعرب عن التزام تونس الكامل بمبادئ اليونسكو ورسالتها النبيلة وحرصها الدائم على دعم التعاون الفكري الدولي، مساهمة منها في بناء مجتمع إنساني قوامه التضامن الفكري والمعنوي كما أقره الميثاق التأسيسي للمنظمة. وفي الختام، أتمنى كل التوفيق لمؤتمرنا وأشكركم على الإنصات.

### 30. The President:

Thank you very much for your speech. Now I give the floor to H.E. Prof. Mariatou Koné, Minister of National Education and Literacy of Côte d'Ivoire.

### 31.1 M. Koné (Côte d'Ivoire) :

Monsieur le Président de la Conférence générale. Monsieur le Président du Conseil exécutif, Madame la Directrice générale, Mesdames et Messieurs les Ministres, Excellences, Mesdames et Messieurs les Ambassadeurs, Mesdames et Messieurs, je suis très honorée de prendre la parole devant cette auguste assemblée. Je voudrais féliciter son Excellence Santiago Mourão pour son élection à la présidence de la 41<sup>e</sup> session de la Conférence générale de l'UNESCO et lui témoigner le soutien de la Côte d'Ivoire durant son mandat. Félicitations à vous, Madame Audrey Azoulay, pour votre brillante réélection à la tête du Secrétariat général de l'UNESCO, Madame la Directrice générale, vous pouvez compter sur le soutien indéfectible de la Côte d'Ivoire pour la réussite de votre nouveau mandat.

31.2 Excellences, Mesdames et Messieurs, l'année 2020 a été marquée par la pandémie à coronavirus qui a affecté et continue d'affecter toute la planète. Tous les secteurs vitaux du développement économique et social n'ont pas été épargnés, notamment l'éducation, les sciences, la culture, la communication et l'information. La plupart des pays du monde ont fermé leurs écoles, collèges, lycées et universités afin de préserver la vie de nos enfants. Cette fermeture a, dans une certaine mesure, perturbé et freiné toutes les avancées et tous les acquis en termes d'apprentissage et d'accès à l'éducation. Cette pandémie à coronavirus nous impose une utilisation plus grande et diversifiée du numérique dans l'enseignement et dans la formation. Excellences, Mesdames et Messieurs, en attendant la célébration officielle des 75 ans de notre Organisation comme cette année, je voudrais, au nom du Président de la République de Côte d'Ivoire, son Excellence Monsieur Alassane Ouattara, souhaiter un excellent anniversaire à tous les pays membres et saluer l'œuvre humaniste qu'a accomplie l'UNESCO depuis 1946.

31.3 Au nom de la Côte d'Ivoire, je rends un vibrant hommage aux femmes et aux hommes qui ont eu l'ingénieuse idée de fonder cette agence des Nations Unies dont la mission principale est de construire la paix sur la base de la coopération pacifique, de la solidarité morale, scientifique et intellectuelle entre les membres. Mesdames et Messieurs, aujourd'hui comme en 1946, l'humanité est confrontée au défi de se protéger et de protéger les plus faibles contre les dangers d'un usage abusif ou démesuré des nouvelles technologies. À cet égard, la Côte d'Ivoire soutient le projet de recommandation sur l'éthique de l'intelligence artificielle et invite la Conférence générale à l'adopter. Nous soutenons

également l'application du projet relatif au développement des sciences ouvertes à travers le monde. Excellences, Mesdames et Messieurs, dès notre prise de fonction, en tant que Ministre de l'Éducation nationale et de l'Alphabétisation, nous avons sollicité l'appui de l'UNESCO pour l'organisation des états généraux de l'Éducation nationale et de l'Alphabétisation en Côte d'Ivoire. Cet appui s'est traduit par la présence effective et la participation de la Sous-Directrice générale pour l'éducation lors du lancement de ces états généraux, le 19 juillet 2021 à Abidjan. Ces assises se veulent inclusives et participatives et rendront leurs conclusions en février 2022.

31.4 Excellences, Mesdames et Messieurs, le Gouvernement ivoirien exprime toute sa reconnaissance, toute sa gratitude à l'UNESCO pour la désignation de l'ONG ivoirienne GA-TIC comme lauréate du Prix Confucius UNESCO pour l'alphabétisation numérique 2021. La Côte d'Ivoire dispose de trois chaires UNESCO, la Chaire de bioéthique, la Chaire culture de la paix et la Chaire aux femmes et pouvoir de décision. Mesdames et Messieurs, nous avons soumis deux demandes de création des chaires UNESCO, la Chaire ERA Ville durable et la Chaire sur la prospective. Nous espérons que ces candidatures seront retenues. La Côte d'Ivoire salue les appuis techniques et financiers apportés à l'Office ivoirien des parcs et réserves naturelles.

31.5 En ce qui concerne le secteur de la culture, notre pays traduit sa reconnaissance à l'UNESCO pour l'inscription des mosquées de type soudanais dans le Nord de la Côte d'Ivoire sur la liste du patrimoine mondial et le soutien constant de la protection et le soutien constant à la protection et à la promotion de la ville historique de Grand-Bassam. Mesdames et Messieurs, je voudrais en ce moment précis réitérer la gratitude de la Côte d'Ivoire, de son Président, Son Excellence Monsieur Alassane Ouattara et de son gouvernement pour la contribution de l'UNESCO à la promotion de l'éducation, de la culture et de la paix dans notre pays. Pour ce nouveau biennium, nous souhaitons une plus grande collaboration, pour la réalisation d'autres grands projets dans les domaines de compétence de l'UNESCO. Je vous remercie infiniment pour votre aimable attention.

32. **The President:**

I give the floor to H.E. Mr Sithree van Heydoorn, Minister of Education, Science, Culture and Sports of Curaçao. We will watch a pre-recorded video. You have the floor, sir.

33.1 **Mr van Heydoorn (Curaçao):**

Mr President of the General Conference, Mr Chairperson of the Executive Board, Madam Director-General, ladies and gentlemen. The Government of Curaçao congratulates you, Mr President, on being chosen to preside over the 41st session of the General Conference of UNESCO. I wish you continued success in the conduct of the proceedings. Mr President, it is such an honour for me to take part in this Conference as I come to you virtually. We are in a new learning reality of distance education since COVID-19 has surfaced.

33.2 The educational system worldwide since the outbreak of the pandemic has and still is experiencing challenges with closures of schools, online learning and teaching. UNESCO, in response to COVID-19, started a pilot programme in 2020 for the professional development for teachers, for blended learning and online strategies for which we are grateful as this gives teachers in Caribbean small island developing States the opportunity to follow online training, long-distance learning and teacher training strategies in our region. The aim to train 10,000 teachers throughout the English- and Dutch-speaking Caribbean small island developing States in the use of online education tools, resources and interactive platforms. To effectively engage students to online learning may seem ambitious to some, but I am pleased to say that it is being implemented successfully.

33.3 The goal of my Ministry is to ensure that every child, young person and adult in Curaçao has equal access to high-quality education and educational facilities where he or she is offered optimal opportunities to develop fully and integrally. Moreover, it is of vital importance that the Ministry is able to better direct, fund and monitor all education matters on the basis of facts and data. To achieve these goals, the Ministry and the schools must be data driven, digital and integrated, among other things. Through the education digitization programme, the Ministry strives to realize and optimize education through innovation, through smart collaboration between all stakeholders, increasing digital literacy, portfolios and implementation of digital learning resources, providing a safe, reliable and future proof infrastructure. The COVID-19 pandemic has shown that the need has become greater to speed up the digitization process.

33.4 Mr President, Curaçao, like many other small island developing States, strongly believes that UNESCO's role of supporting small island developing States should continue. We applaud the fact that there is a unit dedicated to the necessities of small island developing States but firmly believe that the next step should still be small island developing States as a global priority as is the case with Africa and gender. As I said, we have to continue implementing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that have a great impact on us such as quality education, climate change and no poverty.

33.5 It is well known that UNESCO emphasizes the education of girls and women, and rightly so. But let us not forget our boys. We definitely believe that UNESCO should continue to support this and, where possible, make the necessary funds available. Curaçao once again has the opportunity to be in a pioneer and model in the Caribbean for UNESCO projects, which are very important for the development of our Caribbean region. These pilot projects are focused on holding consultations with the culture field for a national disaster risk management plan for the sector in the elaboration of meaningful strategies which will assess the sector and help it become more resilient.

33.6 The resilience of Caribbean small island developing States to disasters and climate change through enhancing the culture sector is imperative, especially now. Culture is not only a product we share with visitors or a sense of pride that we have in who we are, but it is also a source of survival, a system in promoting our biodiversity among others. This was clearly noted during the pandemic with the closure of museums.

33.7 Mr President, disaster preparedness for effective response is important and strengthening resilience to climate change and youth empowerment through protection of cultural and natural heritage in Caribbean small island developing

States is *sine qua non*. We are therefore also pleased to form part of this project to recognize that heritage, and particularly world heritage properties, are exposed to the impacts of natural hazards which threaten their integrity.

33.8 Our term representing the Caribbean on the steering committee for Education 2030 – Sustainable Development Goal 4 is coming to an end and it was an honour for our country to have participated in this. Thank you for this and the confidence in us as an Associate Member. I restate that small island developing States continue to need adequate support for building the resiliency of the effects of climate change in our region and also count on UNESCO's support and the digitization process started in Curaçao. Finally, on behalf of the Government of Curaçao I congratulate UNESCO for 75 years of existence. May this great Organization continue building peace in the minds of men and women for many more years. *Masha danki* and thank you.

#### 34. The President:

Thank you very much, your Excellency. Now I give the floor to H.E. H.E. M. Chakib Benmoussa, Minister of National Preschool Education and Sport of Morocco.

١-٣٥ السيد بن موسى (المغرب):

سيدي رئيس المؤتمر العام، السيدة المديرية العامة لمنظمة الأمم المتحدة للتربية والعلم والثقافة، اليونسكو، السيدات والسادة رؤساء وأعضاء الوفود، أصحاب المعالي والسعادة، حضرات السيدات والسادة، يطيب لي أن أتناول كلمة اليوم باسم المملكة المغربية في أشغال الدورة الحادية والأربعين للمؤتمر العام لمنظمتنا العتيدة، اليونسكو. كما أسعد بحضوري معكم كرئيس للوفد المغربي مباشرة بعد تعييني من طرف صاحب الجلالة الملك محمد السادس وزيراً للتربية الوطنية والتعليم الأولي والرياضة، وبصفتي رئيساً للجنة الوطنية للتربية والعلوم والثقافة. ولا تفوتني هذه المناسبة دون أن أهنيئ السيدة، أودري أزولاي، المديرية العامة للمنظمة على تجديد الثقة فيها بانتخابها لولاية ثانية، والسيد سانتياغو إراسبال مورو بمناسبة انتخابه رئيساً للمؤتمر العام، متمنياً لهما التوفيق في مهامهما. كما أهنيئ كل من السيد أحمد ألتاي، الرئيس السابق للمؤتمر العام، والسيد أغابيتو مبا، رئيس المجلس التنفيذي على حسن تديرهما لمختلف الأشغال التي قاما بها خلال فترة انتدابهما.

٢-٣٥ حضرات السيدات والسادة، كما تعلمون، لقد تسبب انتشار جائحة كوفيد-١٩ في قدر كبير من المعاناة للإنسانية، وكان لها تأثير سلبي على الوضع المادي والاجتماعي للعديد من المواطنين، وكذلك على العديد من القطاعات الاقتصادية. وكان لا بد من اتخاذ تدابير حازمة لحماية كافة الفئات الاجتماعية المتضررة، ولاسيما التدابير المتعلقة باحتواء الوباء، الشيء الذي نتج عنه إغلاق المؤسسات التعليمية والمهنية والجامعية، مما حرم أكثر من ٩٠٪ من المتعلمين على الصعيد العالمي من متابعة دراستهم حضورياً، مع ما ترتب على ذلك من آثار مؤكدة على التعليمات. هذا، وكان من الضروري وبشكل عاجل، اتخاذ تدابير صحية تتناسب وانتشار الوباء وموجاته المتتالية، الشيء الذي فرض الاعتماد على الابتكار في مجال التعليم من حيث الأساليب التربوية، وذلك للحد من تأثير هذه التدابير. وقد أثر هذا الوضع على قدرة العديد من البلدان على ضمان الوصول العادل إلى التعليم الجيد للجميع، وبالتالي إحراز تقدم في تحقيق الهدف ٤ من أهداف التنمية المستدامة. ويدعونا ذلك إلى تعزيز التعاون الدولي فيما يتعلق بتبادل الممارسات الجيدة والاعتماد على المساعدة على التنمية والتضامن.

٣-٣٥ ومن جانبها، تعبأت المملكة المغربية في وقت مبكر جداً بفضل التوجيهات الملكية السامية من أجل التخفيف من تأثير الوباء، سواء على الصعيد الصحي من خلال الإجراءات المتخذة لضمان تعميم التلقيح المجاني للأشخاص ذوي سن يتعدى اثني عشر عاماً، أو لتطبيق إجراءات تقييد حركة المرور أو الإغلاق الشامل عند الاقتضاء، أو على الصعيد الاجتماعي من خلال إنشاء صندوق للتضامن وإطلاق مشروع طموح للحماية الاجتماعية، أو على الصعيد الاقتصادي من خلال خطط قطاعية لدعم التعافي من آثار الجائحة. وفي هذا السياق، استطاعت منظومة التربية والتكوين والبحث العلمي ببلادنا التكيف والتأقلم مع الظروف التي فرضتها هذه الجائحة من خلال إيجاد صيغ جديدة لضمان الاستمرارية البيداغوجية بتبني نظام يزاوج بين التعليم الحضوري والتعليم والتكوين عن بعد، مع إغناء واستمرار بنك الموارد المرئية والرقمية في مختلف التخصصات والمستويات. وتجدر الإشارة في هذا السياق إلى أنه من المتوخى القيام بمجهود كبير للدعم التربوي ودعم التلاميذ الذين يواجهون صعوبات خلال هذه السنة الدراسية لعلاج وتصحيح الآثار السلبية المترتبة على هذه الوضعية.

٤-٣٥ حضرات السيدات والسادة، قبل جائحة كوفيد-١٩، وبعد وقت طويل، أطلق جلالته الملك مبادرة تروم التفكير في وضع نموذج للتنمية يسمح للمملكة المغربية بالتغلب على أوجه القصور في النموذج الحالي وإعداد البلاد لعالم الغد. وتمت مباشرة هذه المهمة من قبل اللجنة الخاصة بالنموذج التنموي الجديد التي تشرفت برئاستها في إطار عملية وطنية عرفت مشاركة جميع القوى الحية في البلاد وتعبئة الذكاء الجماعي. ويشكل هذا النموذج أساس ميثاق التنمية الوطنية الذي يحدد مبادئ وأولويات المملكة فيما يتعلق بالأسئلة الكبرى للتنمية في أفق عام ٢٠٣٥، وإطلاق جيل جديد من المشاريع والإصلاحات المندجة. كما يضع هذا النموذج التنموي المواطن في قلب أولوياته، ويعتبر تعزيز رأس المال البشري وقدرات المواطنين بمثابة الرافعة الأساسية لتكافؤ الفرص والاندماج النشط وممارسة المواطنة وتحقيق الرفاهية. ولهذا الغرض، ينبغي تعزيز رأس المال البشري وإعداده بشكل أفضل للمستقبل من خلال منح جميع المواطنين القدرة على تحمل مسؤولية مستقبلهم والمشاركة في تنمية البلاد وإدماجها في اقتصاد المعرفة والاقتصاد الافتراضي. فإن الطموح هو إطلاق نضمة تعليمية مغربية حقيقية، حيث يجب أن تسمح المدرسة المغربية لكل متعلم باكتساب المهارات الأساسية لضمان الاندماج الاجتماعي وتعزيز نجاحه الأكاديمي والمهني. ويجب على المدرسة المغربية أيضاً تكريس دورها في نقل قيم الإنسانية، وتلك المسندة للمواطنة لضمان أن يكون الشباب المغربي منفتح الدهن وقادر على التكيف في عالم سريع التحول. ومن جهة أخرى يعتبر هذا النموذج أن إدماج الجميع بكرامة أمر ضروري لتعزيز العيش المشترك بشكل متناغم وسلمي بهدف تقوية الرابط الاجتماعي وإتاحة فرص المشاركة لكل مواطن. ولهذا تستلزم هذه الديناميكية المرتبطة بالإدماج المشاركة والوصول المتكافئ إلى الفرص الاقتصادية للفئات الأكثر هشاشة من السكان وتوسيع نطاق الحماية الاجتماعية. كما يتضمن الحفاظ على التراث الحضاري والثقافي للمملكة المغربية التي تمت مراكمتها منذ أكثر من ١٢٠٠ عام، وإثرائه وتعبئة التنوع الثقافي للبلاد كرافعة للانفتاح والحوار والتماسك الاجتماعي. هذا وقد استند البرنامج الحكومي ٢٠٢١-٢٠٢٦ إلى هذا النموذج التنموي باعتباره مرجعاً أساسياً في بناء أولوياته واختياراته الاستراتيجية، وذلك لتسريع تحقيق أهداف التنمية المستدامة بخطة وثيقة. وأعتنم هذه الفرصة لأعلن عن ترشح المملكة المغربية لعضوية المجلس التنفيذي للمنظمة، وكذا لجنة التراث العالمي للفترة ٢٠٢١-٢٠٢٥.

٣٥-٥ حضرات السيدات والسادة، على صعيد آخر في غاية الأهمية، يعتبر التعاون الدولي وتعزيز قيم التضامن العالمي مدخلاً من أهم المداخل الأساسية لتحقيق أهداف التنمية المستدامة، لما يتيح التعاون والتآزر من فرص للتعاون البناء وتبادل التجارب وإغناء سلاسل القيم. وأشيد في هذه المناسبة بالشراكة المثينة التي تجمع المملكة المغربية باليونيسكو. وفي هذا الإطار، أؤكد لكم عزم المملكة المغربية احتضان فعاليات المؤتمر الدولي السابع لتعليم الكبار خلال سنة ٢٠٢٢. كما أن المملكة المغربية تتفق مع إعلان باريس لعام ٢٠٢١ المتعلق بالاستثمار في مستقبل التربية، ويثمن المقتضيات التي جاء بها، عازمة على بذل كل الجهود ضرورية للنهوض بميادين التربية والثقافة والعلوم في ظل التحديات الجديدة التي أفرزتها الجائحة، ودعم مسار التعاون والتنمية، ولاسيما لصالح الدول الأكثر تضرراً خاصة دول القارة الأفريقية. ولا يسعني في ختام هذه الكلمة إلا أن أتمنى لأشغالنا كامل النجاح والتوفيق ولننظمنا المزيد من التألق والنماء. وشكراً على إنصاتكم.

**36. The President:**

Thank you very much. I now give the floor to H.E. H.E. Ms. Silvia Riva Gonzalez, Minister of Culture and Sports of Andorra.

**37.1 Mme Riva (Andorre) :**

Monsieur le président de la Conférence générale, Madame la Directrice générale, Excellences, Mesdames et Messieurs, permettez-moi tout d'abord, Monsieur le Président, de vous adresser mes félicitations pour votre élection de cette 41<sup>e</sup> Conférence générale de l'UNESCO. Soyez assuré du plein soutien de la Principauté d'Andorre dans l'accomplissement de votre haute mission. L'UNESCO fête cette année son 75<sup>e</sup> anniversaire, c'est l'occasion de prendre du recul et de rappeler son mandat unique dans le système des Nations Unies qui n'a cessé de mener notre action sur l'éducation, la culture, les sciences et la communication comme vecteurs essentiels de rapprochement entre les peuples. La crise pandémique que nous connaissons tous, a particulièrement affecté les domaines d'action de l'Organisation. L'accès à la culture, par exemple, s'est nettement réduit au niveau mondial en touchant plus particulièrement les personnes les plus vulnérables et en creusant des inégalités déjà existantes. Nous nous réjouissons donc des efforts menés par l'UNESCO afin de maintenir les écoles ouvertes et nous saluons particulièrement le lancement de la Coalition globale pour l'éducation et la création du Comité directeur de haut niveau ODD4, qui jouera un rôle central dans le suivi des progrès du programme 2030. Ce mécanisme de coopération mondiale en matière d'éducation nous permettra de replacer à nouveau l'éducation au cœur de notre politique commune. En ce sens, l'Andorre a décrété en 2021 que l'éducation des filles et la formation des femmes serait sa priorité biannuelle principale, en dehors des priorités déjà établies au niveau de sa coopération au développement.

37.2 Par ailleurs, nous tenons à remercier la Directrice générale pour ses efforts afin de mener un processus de transformation pour reformer et moderniser l'Organisation et lui permettre de s'adapter à la situation actuelle et mieux répondre aux défis mondiaux. Merci. En effet, le monde en mouvement dans lequel nous vivons permet des progrès vertigineux. Néanmoins, ceux-ci nécessitent d'être encadrés. L'Andorre a fait le pari de l'innovation en tant que moteur de transformation de la société, tout en restant consciente des enjeux éthiques et des menaces auxquels nous sommes confrontés. C'est la raison pour laquelle l'Andorre apportera son soutien à la Recommandation sur l'éthique de l'intelligence artificielle qui nous permettra de garantir que la technologie serve d'intérêt supérieur des citoyens et non l'inverse.

37.3 Excellences, Mesdames, Messieurs, outre l'éducation, le secteur de la culture a également été durement touché par la pandémie. Pendant les premiers mois de confinement, notre gouvernement s'est efforcé de maintenir accessibles certains espaces, d'abord de manière virtuelle et très rapidement en assurant l'ouverture des centres culturels de loisirs. En effet, il était urgent de proposer des solutions alternatives pour éviter une fracture sociale et pour soutenir les artistes à court et à long terme. Aujourd'hui, plus que jamais, les gens ont besoin de la culture, une culture qui a dû se réinventer pour continuer d'être ce bien commun essentiel qui nous unit. À cet égard, l'Andorre se félicite du succès du mouvement ResiliArt, lancé au début de la pandémie, auquel nous avons pu apporter notre collaboration par le biais d'artistes ayant participé au projet Art Camp. Ce projet de la Commission nationale andorrane représente un excellent exemple de diplomatie culturelle pour la paix. En ce sens, nous nous réjouissons du succès de l'initiative Li Beirut lancée par la directrice générale en 2020. Le gouvernement d'Andorre est fier d'y avoir participé et nous renouvellerons notre contribution en 2021, tout comme celle apportée au Programme international pour le développement de la communication.

37.4 Mesdames, Messieurs, l'Andorre accorde par ailleurs une grande importance aux conventions de l'UNESCO, en particulier à celles liées à la protection de notre patrimoine commun, culturel et naturel. Consciente de la valeur de celles-ci, l'Andorre prépare actuellement des candidatures multinationales. Je souhaite citer en particulier la candidature à la liste du patrimoine mondial que nous travaillons avec la France et l'Espagne sur les témoignages matériels de la construction de la Co-principauté d'Andorre. Ce travail de préparation, ainsi que de nombreuses années de recherche historique et de collaboration entre États ont déjà enrichi de ce fait même notre patrimoine. C'est également dans cet esprit inclusif et participatif que nous avons effectué un travail aboutissant à un Livre blanc de la culture et au futur Plan stratégique de la culture 2030. En effet, nous considérons l'accès à la culture comme une facette primordiale de la lutte contre l'exclusion sociale et la promotion du développement humain durable.

37.5 Concernant la protection de l'environnement, l'année dernière, Andorre s'est vue octroyer sa première réserve de biosphère. Un moment historique pour le pays qui nous permet de continuer d'avancer vers l'établissement d'un environnement plus durable dans lequel la relation entre les ressources, la population et l'activité économique ne compromet pas l'équilibre des générations futures. Dans cet esprit, l'Andorre veut viser encore plus loin et présentera prochainement sa candidature pour devenir le premier pays réserve de biosphère.

37.6 Madame la directrice générale, au nom de la Principauté d'Andorre, je vous adresse nos plus sincères félicitations pour votre réélection à la tête de l'UNESCO. Cette réélection témoigne de votre engagement et le succès déjà accomplis. Soyez assuré de notre plein soutien pour garantir que l'UNESCO continue d'être cet organisme sentinelle et multilingue, cet interlocuteur privilégié chargé de placer l'éducation au sein de la culture au service du progrès et la paix par tout dans le monde. Je vous remercie de votre attention.



38. **The President:**

I now call on H.E. Dr Justin Valentin, Minister of Education of the Republic of Seychelles. You have the floor, sir.

39.1 **Mr Valentin (Seychelles):**

Mr President of the Conference, Madam Director-General of UNESCO, Excellencies, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen. I would start my speech with a message from the president of the Republic of Seychelles, H. E. Mr Wavell Ramkalawan: "On behalf of the people of Seychelles I wish our Organization a happy 75th anniversary. Through the delivery of its mandates, UNESCO has contributed immensely to fighting some of the worst forms of inequalities in our world. We should build on our past successes and learn from our shortcomings to contribute in the emergence of a world with a brighter future."

39.2 Seychelles benefits from assistance from UNESCO for different projects, especially under the Participation Programme, which is contributing significantly to our sustainable development agenda. Speaking of sustainability, Seychelles is in the process of setting up a national technical working group of on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), which will comprise of all the relevant stakeholders for the implementation of the ESD for 2030 framework launched during the virtual UNESCO World Conference on Education for Sustainable Development earlier in May. My country strongly promotes sustainable development because our survival depends on it. Being a small developing State, Seychelles is directly impacted by climate change. To further illustrate this existential threat, I would like to echo the sentiment of President Wavell Ramkalawan at COP26 in Glasgow last week that if we do not deal with climate change, small island developing States like the Seychelles risk losing some of their islands, including Aldabra, a UNESCO World Heritage site in the Seychelles.

39.3 This is a sad reminder of our vulnerability. The irony is that while our development model of complying with climate change agenda and protocols and our effort in promoting sustainable development have resulted in Seychelles gaining a high-income country status, we have unfortunately become the victims of our success since we have lost access to concessionary finance in most instances. In Seychelles, we feel that we are being penalized for our hard work. Our country is vulnerable and the pandemic battered our tourism-dependent economy. We want the world and the UNESCO community to take heed when we talk about vulnerability. I make a plea to donor countries to not exclude us from assistance or cooperation programmes. I reiterate the call made by the Government of Seychelles that the vulnerability index be adopted as the benchmark to calculate support for small States like Seychelles as income index is no longer a relevant yardstick. I call on the UNESCO community to keep Seychelles in mind as the world recovers from the pandemic. Thank you.

*(The speaker continues in French)*

39.4 Ma vision à la tête du Ministère de l'Éducation nationale des Seychelles est d'améliorer la performance de notre système éducatif pour qu'il puisse produire une éducation de qualité. La stratégie qui opérationnalise cette vision vise à transformer ce système pour faciliter le déploiement des nouvelles technologies afin d'aboutir à des innovations dans l'enseignement.

39.5 La pandémie a rendu l'enseignement en ligne indispensable et nous nous sommes rendus compte que certains des défis que nous rencontrons dans le domaine éducatif, tels que le manque d'enseignement, pouvaient être réalisés si nous investissons davantage dans l'éducation virtuelle. Pour conclure, je dirais qu'en dépit de sa vulnérabilité, les Seychelles restent attachées aux principes qui régissent les actions de l'UNESCO et les valeurs qu'elle épouse. Car avec son concours, nous saurons transformer cette vulnérabilité en une résilience. Dans cet esprit, nous sollicitons l'appui des autres pays et organisations internationales pour soutenir nos efforts visant à accroître notre croissance économique et développement. Nous ne ménagerons aucun effort pour faire de notre Institut du développement de la petite enfance qui bénéficie, bénéficie du statut de centre catégorie 2 et de l'UNESCO, un centre d'excellence régional.

39.6 Nous envisagerons, nous envisageons de promouvoir davantage les FTP, le TIC, la STEM et l'éducation financière dans nos écoles. Nous demeurons attachés au maintien d'un institut de recherche au sein de l'Université des Seychelles pour entreprendre des études qui permettront de mieux protéger notre riche patrimoine culturel et biodiversité. J'avance ici l'idée de promouvoir la coopération Sud-Sud et l'intégration régionale dans les régions du Sud-Ouest de l'océan Indien et l'Afrique du Sud-Est, à travers le développement du programme du master pluridisciplinaire. Pour surmonter notre vulnérabilité et la transformer en résilience, nous n'avons aucun d'autre choix que de retrousser nos manches et de travailler en collaboration. Je vous remercie pour votre aimable attention.

40. **The President:**

Thank you, your Excellency. I call now H.E. Ms Ankica Gudeljevic, Minister of Civil Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina. You have the floor.

41.1 **Ms Gudeljevic (Bosnia and Herzegovina):**

Distinguished President of the General Conference, dear Director-General, your Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen. It is my great pleasure and honour to greet you on behalf of the delegation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and to express my pleasure to attend the 41st session of the UNESCO General Conference. Allow me to express my support for the proposed UNESCO programme for the upcoming period, and to emphasize the commitment of Bosnia and Herzegovina to actively cooperate with UNESCO in order to achieve the set goals. Through its mission, UNESCO contributes to peace by promoting cooperation between nations, and in this period when the whole world was facing the COVID-19 pandemic, the importance of the role of UNESCO came to the fore.

41.2 UNESCO has once again demonstrated its ability responding to key global challenges. Cooperation in the field of education and support to the institutions in a period of online teaching is especially important for us. I would like to emphasize the excellent cooperation we have with UNESCO in the framework of many activities in the field of education, science, culture, media and information literacy, which are implemented both in Bosnia and Herzegovina and regionally. Bosnia and Herzegovina is especially committed to the realization of the goals of sustainable development. The document

“Framework for the realization of the goals of sustainable development in Bosnia and Herzegovina” also includes the goals of sustainable development for education and culture.

41.3 In cooperation with the UNESCO Office in Sarajevo, we are successfully cooperating on the identification of key indicators in the educational and cultural sectors, which will contribute to better strategic planning. Together we are implementing a project called “Let’s design education again!” creating better education for children during and after the COVID-19 crisis. The main goals of the project are the digitization of education and the improvement of teachers’ skills for performing online and combined teaching models. Drivers of sustainable development, when we talk about education, are related to quality education and lifelong learning, better matching of labour market supply with demand and investment in research and development – all in order to build a modern education system.

41.4 When it comes to science, I would like to point out that the challenges we face today require greater investment and even stronger cooperation. I appreciate that by working together we can answer global questions and challenges, which only science can give us. In 2012, Bosnia and Herzegovina hosted a meeting of ministers of science of southeast Europe in cooperation with UNESCO. This year we initiated the relaunch of this platform. We hope for a positive response, having in mind the importance of cooperation in this area and the readiness of UNESCO to support us.

41.5 Also, the cooperation we have in the field of media and information literacy is very important for us. Media and information literacy are the umbrella competence in the digital age, with the need for further development in the context of the digital transformation of society. Wider consultations on strategies and policies for the development of media and information literacy are under way with the support of UNESCO and the involvement of a large number of different institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

41.6 Previously, Bosnia and Herzegovina successfully cooperated with UNESCO within the projects supported by the “Fund for the Elimination of Doping in Sports”. Further strengthening of cooperation is our commitment because by investing in sports we contribute to the development of a healthy society and the promotion of sports values.

41.7 Bosnia and Herzegovina has ratified all UNESCO conventions in the field of culture and we are committed to their implementation. Last year, we inscribed another element on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, the traditional grass mowing competition custom in Kupres, and prepared two more nominations (Nevesinje Olympic Games and Sevdalinka). Bosnia and Herzegovina also participates in the serial nomination of the Lipizzan Horse Breeding Traditions on the Representative List.

41.8 We especially emphasize the importance of digitalization and preservation of elements of intangible cultural heritage, and one such project is under way with the support of UNESCO. Bosnia and Herzegovina participated in the work of the World Heritage Committee for the period 2018-2021. We have tried to contribute to key issues through our work within the Committee. The first natural site from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Janj Rainforest, has been inscribed on the World Heritage List this year. Two more nomination files for natural sites have been prepared: Vjetrenica Cave and Una National Park.

41.9 Working together to preserve and protect cultural diversity is a precondition for the existence of basic human values of society and fundamental human rights. Bosnia and Herzegovina highly appreciates the role and mandate of UNESCO and we are strongly committed to further strengthening cooperation. I express my desire and readiness to give our contribution in achieving goals and priorities of UNESCO in the direction of preserving peace, eradicating poverty, ensuring sustainable development and promoting intercultural dialogue while respecting cultural diversity. Thank you for your attention.

42. **The President:**

Thank you very much for your intervention. I call now H.E. Ms Nina Obuljen-Koržinek, Minister of Culture and Media of Croatia.

43.1 **Ms Obuljen-Koržinek (Croatia):**

Thank you very much dear President of the General Conference, Madam Director-General, your Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen. It is my pleasure to have the opportunity to address the General Conference once again in person. On behalf of the Croatian delegation let me start by congratulating you, Mr President, for your election as President of the General Conference, as well as Madam Azoulay for her re-election as Director-General of our Organization.

43.2 Since our meeting two years ago, the world has changed significantly. Global challenges such as major climate and demographic changes, migratory flows, political extremism, disregard for international law, the spread of fake news and misinformation all have existed before. However, the pandemic deepened them even more and further highlighted new divisions, poverty, inequality and exclusion, especially of vulnerable groups. This taught us a lesson. When we are vulnerable, it is easier to divide us, and this in turn can lead to new conflicts, violence and extreme forms of behaviour. This is why we need joint cooperation through a strong multilateral framework. For it, we are grateful to UNESCO as well as other partners.

43.3 Dear colleagues, I am pleased that during this session we will adopt many important decisions for the functioning of UNESCO in the current and post-COVID period. The consequences of the pandemic are worrying, especially those related to education. So, Croatia welcomes all initiatives that have enabled the continuation of education, especially what we learned about virtual education. Education is a fundamental human right and must remain a key engine of sustainable development in this regard. Croatia remains committed to meeting the Agenda 2030 and Sustainable Development Goal 4 in particular, inclusive and lifelong learning for all, and therefore welcomes the strengthening of the global mechanisms for educational cooperation. We also welcome the Futures of Education report, which recognizes that education is humanity’s greatest renewable resource that can provide answers to all today’s challenges. When it comes to higher education, I am

pleased to report that Croatia was one of the first States to ratify the Global Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education.

43.4 We welcome also the first global document on ethical principles in artificial intelligence that will enable prevention of many of the risks we face in the digital world. We also welcome the adoption of the draft recommendation on open science. With accelerated climate change, the fragility of our planet is becoming increasingly apparent and reflected in the growing threat to biodiversity. Fifty years ago, the vision of the Man and Biosphere programme began to create a network of biosphere reserves to build societies in harmony with nature. This vision was followed in recent years by Croatia and Hungary and recently joined by Austria, Slovenia and Serbia, where we created the largest protected river area in Europe, the Mura-Drava-Danube Reserve. This example shows the true meaning of unity and cooperation for the preservation of natural heritage.

43.5 Ladies and gentlemen, in the age of closures, the role of arts and culture has come to the fore more than ever. Croatia has strongly supported all UNESCO initiatives, such as ResilArt, which have sought to reduce the harmful impact of the pandemic on the culture and creative industries and the diversity of cultural expressions. We will actively contribute to the preparation of MONDIACULT 2022, which will be an opportunity to adopt new policies to help artists affected by the crisis. Through the International Centre for Underwater Archaeology in Zadar, Croatia strongly supports the implementation of the 2001 UNESCO Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage, and in this context, with eight Mediterranean partners, we have decided to work together to preserve the Skerki Banks site in Tunisia. Croatia supports UNESCO's founding vision, which is today more critical than ever. In the light of this important UNESCO anniversary, I invite us all to join forces in promoting world peace by strengthening our intellectual and moral solidarity and unity based on dialogue and mutual understanding. It is the future of UNESCO. It is the future of all of us. Thank you very much.

44. **The President:**

Thank you very much for your intervention. Now I give the floor H.E. Ms Liina Kersna, Minister of Education and Research of Estonia. We will watch a pre-recorded video. You have the floor, madam.

45.1 **Ms Kersna (Estonia):**

Mr President of the General Conference, Madam Director-General, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, Estonia aligns itself fully with the statement delivered by the European Union. At this General Conference, we celebrate UNESCO's 75th anniversary. Just a few weeks ago, Estonia celebrated the 30th anniversary of our membership in UNESCO. During these years we have become increasingly engaged in UNESCO's activities. We value UNESCO's commitment in the promotion and protection of human rights for all and in mainstreaming gender equality and the empowerment of women across all goals and targets.

45.2 For over a year and a half no decision has been possible without considering the COVID-19 crisis. We welcome UNESCO's leadership in keeping schools open. Understanding that schools must be the last ones to close has been a guiding principle around the world, including in Estonia. As we enter another year of COVID-19, exchanging the best practices as an international community will help us minimize its devastating impact on learners. As a general ideal of the Ministerial Global Education meeting, we must work together to increase investments into education. We must mitigate the learning gaps caused by distance learning and set forth the role of education as a driving force in coming out of this crisis.

45.3 We are proud to note that UNESCO has taken a lead in several landmark initiatives in response to current challenges. Through the Draft Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence and the Draft Recommendation on Open Science, we believe that the potential of artificial intelligence outweighs its challenges. Artificial intelligence has the potential to empower all people, provided they are developed, deployed and governed in a way that aligns with democratic values and human rights. We will work to foster secure and ethical artificial intelligence that reflects our shared values and commitment to protection, the rights and the dignity of all our citizens.

45.4 We welcome the recommendation on open science for its timeliness and for its power to become a tool for addressing systemic difficulties faced in science, technology and innovation in a context where urgent social and environmental issues are increasingly connected. I believe that the true timeliness of this recommendation lies in its power to open up scientific thoughts and evidence-based decision-making in times where the spread of misinformation is unprecedented, posing a threat to our democratic core values.

45.5 Among key developments, Estonia is particularly glad to note its accession to the Global Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education. This is a milestone both in practical terms as well as further contributing to Sustainable Development Goals, mutual understanding and increasingly international exchange. We hope that other countries will follow and that the Convention will enter into force soon.

45.6 It is essential to engage youth in the discussions related to global challenges and UNESCO's mandate. Estonia hopes that the 12th UNESCO Youth Forum held online during this General Conference provides future change-makers with the platform to contribute to the global dialogue on the effects of COVID-19 and building back better after the pandemic.

45.7 Honourable delegates, UNESCO has made great efforts to make the role of culture and sustainable development more visible. In the face of the pandemic, we appreciate the work done by the Culture Sector to facilitate, support and promote continued access to culture. Estonia is ready to work with UNESCO and other United Nations agencies to protect multilingualism and indigenous languages, in particular through contributing to the International Decade of Indigenous Languages. The creeping reality of armed conflicts and ongoing crisis in the world challenge UNESCO's ability to respond to the destruction of cultural heritage, including organized looting and illicit trafficking. Estonia appreciates the work done by the Heritage Emergency Fund to respond to the wide range of emergencies affecting heritage, and we are proud to be one of its donors.

45.8 Estonia recognizes the valuable work done by UNESCO in promoting freedom of expression online and offline and the safety of journalists. The recent global study on violence against women journalists testifies to UNESCO's increasing focus on threats faced by women journalists. Joint efforts of all stakeholders, including civil society, must continue. Estonia is contributing to the global debate following the 30th anniversary of the Windhoek Declaration and will host a global conference for media freedom that will take place in Tallinn in February next year. Estonia wishes every success to Ms Audrey Azoulay for her second term as Director-General. As the next Medium-Term Strategy is about to be adopted, UNESCO should continue its active engagement with their broader United Nations reform efforts. We are confident that commitment to that strategic transformation will ensure a more effective and efficient delivery of UNESCO's mandate. Thank you.

46. **The President:**

Thank you very much, Excellency for your intervention. Now I call Professeur Majesté N. Ihou Wateba, Minister for Higher Education and Research of Togo. You have the floor, sir.

47.1 **M. Wateba (Togo) :**

Bonjour. Monsieur le Président de la Conférence générale, Monsieur le Président du Conseil général et Madame la Directrice générale de l'UNESCO, je voudrais, à l'entame de mes propos, au nom du Président de la République du Togo, Son excellence Faure Essozimna Gnassingbé, vous féliciter pour votre brillante élection pour quatre ans, à nouveau à la tête de cette prestigieuse Organisation. Puisse la providence vous aider à accomplir cette mission délicate, mais exaltante. Les mêmes pensées vont également à Monsieur le Président de la Conférence générale pour son élection et pour la qualité de la conduite des travaux à cette assise. Le gouvernement togolais, pour renforcer sa résilience par rapport aux chocs futurs, s'est doté de 42 projets et programmes, dont deux essentiels ont été consacrés à l'éducation, à savoir la révision de la politique de l'éducation axée vers les métiers prioritaires et l'assurance qualité dans l'enseignement de façon générale. Ceci a pour but essentiel de relever trois défis majeurs auxquels l'ensemble des pays sont confrontés.

47.2 Le premier, c'est le défi en termes de notre conversion, du moins, en notre capacité à la conversion numérique. Pour ce faire, d'autres pays se sont dotés d'outils de numérisation importants, à savoir mettre en place une plate-forme d'enseignement à partir duquel tout l'enseignement universitaire, et même dans les autres structures, puisse se faire de façon aisée. Nous avons donc, pour le réussir, nous avons essayé de former d'abord tous les enseignants à l'utilisation de l'outil numérique et à la scénarisation et la mise en ligne des cours et des supports d'enseignement didactique. Cette stratégie a été possible grâce à la mise en place également d'un ministère dédié à cette, à cette tâche, notamment le Ministère de l'économie numérique. Parce que la COVID l'a montré, il est aujourd'hui impossible, voire difficile pour les États de pouvoir dérouler des programmes d'enseignement eu égard à la massification des étudiants dans les universités et surtout, que la construction des universités s'avère très chère, donc il est important que nous puissions utiliser d'autres techniques de communication pour enseigner à distance et permettre à tous les étudiants d'avoir accès à la connaissance.

47.3 En marge de cette stratégie qui est le volet numérique, nous œuvrons également dans la réalisation de la Charte de ce que nous appelons les métiers prioritaires. Il n'est plus question aujourd'hui d'enseigner pour enseigner, mais il faut enseigner sur les thématiques pour lesquelles le Togo a un retard qu'il cherche à combler. Cette réalisation de cette Charte sur les priorités nous a donc amenés à mettre en place également, avec l'appui de la Banque mondiale, de grandes écoles que nous appelons les écoles d'excellence. Ces écoles d'excellence sont faites pour répondre aux thématiques auxquelles nous avons aujourd'hui des insuffisances. Une des écoles d'excellence, c'est entre autres, par exemple, l'école d'excellence sur la maîtrise de l'énergie. On sait que les énergies fossiles ont une durée de vie de quelques décennies encore, donc le Togo doit mettre en œuvre aujourd'hui toutes les stratégies pour utiliser les énergies alternatives pour répondre aux challenges de demain en ce qui concerne la maîtrise de l'électricité.

47.4 Il est également question pour nous de maîtriser suffisamment les énergies dont nous regorgeons. Nous avons le soleil comme richesse. Il est important pour nous, que nous puissions valoriser cette source d'énergie pour que nous puissions financer nos ambitions de demain. Et enfin, nous avons également comme Centre d'excellence pour répondre à cette thématique, le Centre d'excellence sur les sciences aviaires, car aujourd'hui, une des problématiques des difficultés de l'humanité, c'est comment arriver à nourrir la planète. Et ce Centre d'excellence travaille également avec le secteur agricole pour créer toutes les conditions nécessaires, d'abord pour la maîtrise de la fertilité de nos sols et voir dans quelle mesure, dans telle ou telle partie du pays, on peut privilégier la culture, des cultures de rente pour nourrir l'économie.

47.5 Le troisième élément sur lequel nous nous basons, notamment au Togo, c'est sur la qualité de l'enseignement avec l'assurance qualité, qui est un projet, que nous portons avec l'UNESCO sur l'assurance Shenzhen, qui est un projet important dont l'objectif est de faire de la pédagogie universitaire et arrimer nos curricula d'enseignement par rapport aux défis d'aujourd'hui. Ce centre est mis en place et il y a eu donc une ratification d'une loi d'orientation qui permet effectivement de dérouler les décrets d'application de cette loi. Ce qui nous permet aujourd'hui au Togo d'avoir un cadre législatif, un cadre légal qui permet de faire de l'assurance qualité et aussi, en même temps, de mettre en place des cadres pédagogiques pour l'enseignement et la révision, quand c'est nécessaire, de l'adaptation des formations par rapport aux besoins de demain. Nous sommes donc à cette tribune de l'UNESCO, l'UNESCO ne va que dans le domaine de l'éducation.

47.6 C'est le lieu pour moi de remercier, de féliciter une fois encore cette Organisation qui a accepté d'inscrire cet institut culturel de mon pays au patrimoine mondial de l'humanité. Au mois de décembre, notamment les 9 et 10 décembre, le Togo va abriter une importante rencontre à Lomé sur la première réunion sur la « Convention d'Addis », sur la reconnaissance et la qualification des diplômés dans l'enseignement supérieur. C'est pour nous une grande messe du savoir à laquelle je convie Madame la Directrice générale pour cette occasion où nous allons parler ensemble de ce que nous faisons au niveau de la francophonie et surtout d'adapter nos curricula par rapport aux défis de demain.

47.7 Je finis mes propos en disant que le gouvernement togolais, que j'ai l'honneur ici de représenter, manifeste une fois encore son désir de travailler aux côtés de la francophonie pour la valorisation de nos acquis et aussi la valorisation

du savoir, du faire-savoir, du savoir-faire et de l'épanouissement des sciences et de la culture dans le monde. Je vous remercie.

**48. The President:**

I call now H.E. Datin Paduka Malai Hajah Halimah Malai Haji Yussof, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Permanent Delegate of Brunei Darussalam to UNESCO. You have the floor, madam.

**49.1 Ms Yussof (Brunei Darussalam):**

Mr President, Madam Director-General, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen. Allow me to deliver the national statement on behalf of the Chairperson of the Brunei Darussalam National Commission of UNESCO. *Bismillāh ir-rahmān ir-rahīm; as-salāmu 'alaikum* (In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate; peace be upon you). Firstly, I would like to congratulate you, Mr President on your election and wish you success in steering the esteemed Conference. I would also like to congratulate Her Excellency Madam Azoulay on her re-election of Director-General of UNESCO and we express our deep appreciation on her leadership and remarkable work and efforts aimed at promoting multilateralism and values of humanism, reinforcing UNESCO's core mandate for the creation of peaceful societies, by endorsing and protecting heritage, cultural diversity, and global citizenship education, particularly in our attempt to adapt to the new normal.

49.2 Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, the COVID-19 pandemic has significantly disrupted and caused profound changes to our structure and routine, not to mention our efforts to achieving strategies that have been in place to accomplish the Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda. Governments and organizations all over the world are prioritizing discussions and action plans to overcome the health emergency as well as implementing rapid economic mitigation measures aimed at protecting livelihoods in the face of abrupt losses of income. With this the pandemic has not only posed unprecedented challenges but it also has presented us with great opportunities to redefine our sectoral landscapes by identifying numerous measures not only in the health sector, but also strengthening efforts in other areas for its recovery.

49.3 Despite all obstacles, Brunei Darussalam remains committed to building back stronger the progress of the Sustainable Development Goals. The 2030 Agenda complements Brunei Darussalam's national vision, Wawasan Brunei 2035, where the country aspires to be widely recognized for its educated, highly skilled and accomplished people, with a high quality of life and a dynamic and sustainable economy by 2035. Brunei Darussalam aims to ensure that the country and its people will continue to thrive and prosper in the fast-evolving world while preserving its unique social, cultural and traditional values.

49.4 Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, due to global disruptions and the Fourth Industrial Revolution, digital transformation of the education system now has become one of the common coping measures. The Ministry of Education of Brunei Darussalam is fortunate to have established the Educational Technology Centre, prior to the pandemic, and as part of its Strategic Plan 2018-2022, to support the use of educational technology in teaching and learning towards producing digitally literate learners. However, the pandemic has revealed some digital gaps. As a long-term strategy, the Ministry is embarking on the "Ministry of Education Digital Transformation Plan", in making digital learning a new norm in our education system, underlining three main areas; education technology, management technology, and enabling policies and infrastructure.

49.5 The adoption of digital literacy for our students, teachers and school leaders has accelerated, enabling them to work side-by-side with technology. A variety of professional development initiatives have been developed to enhance the digital readiness of our teachers, school leaders and system leaders. In this regard, the Ministry of Education of Brunei Darussalam is currently developing its digital citizenship framework and guidelines, keeping in mind the issues of privacy and ethics. This transformative journey cannot be done alone by the Ministry of Education of Brunei Darussalam. There have been concerted efforts and strong collaboration with various key stakeholders, through our whole-of-nation approach in ensuring equitable access to digital learning for our students, particularly for the vulnerable and the disadvantaged.

49.6 The COVID-19 pandemic has hit the world with far-reaching effects in various aspects of life, in particular, with socioeconomic activities. In Brunei Darussalam, resilience to overcome the disruptions can be described through digitalization in the delivery of public services and the efforts being made towards a SMART nation. Thus, the digital government is an agenda that the Ministry of Transport and Infocommunications has been spearheading, since the launch of our very first national Digital Economy Masterplan 2025 with the vision of "Smart Nation through Digital Transformation". This effort ensures that government services can continue to be given to the public with the least disruption and therefore better impact the lives of its citizens.

49.7 In addition, we continue to foster good relations with our regional and international counterparts, where we work together in sharing best practices in our journey during this transformation with each country having its own unique sets of objectives, approaches and measures. To conclude, we look forward to and reaffirm our strong commitments to further strategic cooperation under the Draft Medium-Term Strategy for 2022-2029, and to strengthening regional and international cooperation and partnership, including capacity building and assistance, towards attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals. I would also like to state that Brunei Darussalam remains committed to achieving Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development, the Sustainable Development Goals, and UNESCO's constructive contribution towards the education, science and culture agenda around the world as it celebrates its 75th anniversary. Thank you.

**50. The President:**

Thank you very much for your speech. I now call H.E. Mr Ludovit Paulis, State Secretary in charge of Higher Education, Research and Science to the Ministry of Education, Science Research and Sport of Slovakia. You have the floor, sir.

51.1 **Mr Paulis (Slovakia):**

Dear Mr President, dear Madam Director-General, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen. First of all, I would like to warmly congratulate Madam Director-General for your re-election with an impressive majority of votes which is clear evidence of your successful and very skilful management of this Organization, your ability to bring about an appeasement in its working, and to transform the Organization so that it responds effectively to the current challenges. Slovakia has been strongly supporting you throughout your first mandate, and we are eager to do so in the four years to come. Allow me to congratulate also you, Mr President, for your successful election, Slovakia is ready to work closely with you and support your objectives.

51.2 Today, we are celebrating 75 years of the existence of UNESCO, 75 years of many far-reaching achievements. They all have something in common: adherence to fundamental principles of multilateralism, mutual respect and tolerance as well as development of human potential. Those are principles innate to UNESCO which allows it to provide an immediate and effective response to challenges of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Multilateralism, partnership and cooperation have confirmed their strength and vital necessity. Moreover, the areas under UNESCO's mandate clearly demonstrated their crucial importance in post- COVID-19 recovery. Let me touch briefly upon each of them.

51.3 Regarding education, Slovakia welcomes the initiative "Futures of Education." Indeed, the time has come to assess globally what approach to education is adequate in an era of growing interconnectedness and dynamism, in an era of common challenges and deepening disparities. We share the belief of the Director-General that "Our deeply humanist DNA cannot let us reduce education to a technical or technological issue, nor even to an economic one."

51.4 Effective and accelerated implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is nowadays one of the main tasks of all United Nations agencies, including UNESCO. Sufficient financing for development is a precondition for progress, and the mobilisation of public and private resources a key for its achievement. The Renewed Global Education Cooperation Mechanism has thus a crucial role to assemble all relevant stakeholders and strengthen our commitment and accountability in the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 4.

51.5 Inclusive and quality education, especially of young people, plays a major role in this process. Through education on sustainability, we lead young people towards the adoption of core ethical values and solidarity and successively to an understanding that helping the most vulnerable and excluded people is the best expression of humanity.

51.6 Regarding culture, placing culture at the heart of development policies is the only way to ensure an inclusive and equitable development. Despite the severe impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on cultural sector, international cooperation in the field of culture has continued thanks to UNESCO. Slovakia is very pleased with the successful inscription of transnational nominations of the Danube Limes as well as the Ancient and Primeval Beech Forests of the Carpathians and other regions of Europe on the World Heritage List, which already includes eight Slovak sites of outstanding universal value.

51.7 Intangible, living heritage forms an integral part of Slovak culture, identity and history. The Slovak candidature to the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage in 2022 is an expression of its true devotion to share Slovak expertise with partners in UNESCO.

51.8 Regarding science, artificial intelligence has a potential to radically transform our lives. Artificial intelligence can indeed represent a catalyst for great progress of humanity. Nevertheless, it can also bring many challenges such as the increase of inequalities and tensions within societies. Therefore, the adoption of the Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence will be a major milestone in setting up the global regulation framework. Slovakia strongly supports the lead role of UNESCO in the implementation of the Recommendation. Equally, the Recommendation on Open Science will enable important advances to bring citizens closer to science.

51.9 Regarding communication and information, media freedom and fact-based journalism are interdependent with democracy. They serve as its guarantee while democracy has to guarantee the access to information and protect freedom of speech and expression. The Slovak Republic, as a member of the International Coalition for Freedom of the Media, actively supports the protection of journalists, media freedom and unhindered access to information.

51.10 To conclude, the Slovak Republic as a founding member of UNESCO, has fully supported its mission since the very beginning. We welcome the focus and priorities set out in the new Medium-Term Strategy for 2022-2029, which gives us the certainty that UNESCO will play a cardinal role in the twenty-first century. Happy birthday UNESCO!

52. **The President:**

Thank you very much. We have listened to the last speaker on our list for this morning session. Therefore, ladies and gentlemen we thank you very much for sharing your vision and experience with us. This morning the debate has really been very enriching. I am looking forward very much to continuing our debate this afternoon. Sorry, I have been informed that Zambia would like to request the floor for an urgent matter. With your consent dear colleagues, I will give the distinguished delegate of Zambia the floor. You have the floor, sir.

**Item 1.3 Adoption of the agenda (41 C/1 Prov. Rev. and Corrigenda)**

53. **Zambia:**

Thank you, Mr President. Following your report of the Bureau meeting held this morning on document 41 C/2 specifically on the open-ended working group on the working methods of the 41st session of the General Conference, Zambia has noted that the recommendations of the working group highlighted in the annex are not just for the 41st session of the General Conference, but apply to future sessions. In this regard, Zambia as a sponsor wishes to propose that item 7.4, the draft amendment to Rule 4 of the Rules of Procedure of the General Conference, be withdrawn since its concern on future sessions has been considered in the report presented by the working group. Thank you.

54. **The President:**

Thank you very much Zambia. In this case, we have to apply Rule 15.1 of the Rules of Procedure of the General Conference on amendments and deletions of new items. In this case, I will consult colleagues to see if there is agreement on this proposal. I see no comments. Therefore it is **adopted**. Thank you very much. We will resume our work at 3 p.m. This meeting is **adjourned**.

*The meeting rose at 1.20 p.m.*