

**Right of Reply by H.E. Mr. Kyaw Zeya, Ambassador and Permanent  
Delegate of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to UNESCO  
Plenary Session, 204<sup>th</sup> Session of the UNESCO Executive Board  
10 April 2018**

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Mr. Chair,  
Madame Director-General,  
Madame President of the General Conference,  
Distinguished delegates,

At the outset, I have the honour to express my sincere congratulations and fullest support to Mr. Chair of the Executive Board and Madame Director-General of UNESCO.

As Madame Director-General rightly stated in her speech yesterday, “the credibility of UNESCO has been weakened in recent years” as we are facing financial constraints due to overdue arrears and political diversion among some member states.

The founding purpose of UNESCO is to contribute to peace and security by promoting collaboration among the nations through education, science and culture. Every member state of UNESCO should refrain from mingling politicized matters with noble areas that UNESCO has focused on.

It is the time for action for all member states to push forward the Organization with collective strength to overcome its challenges in the interests of the Organization and its member states.

However, it is my deep regret to note that the representative of Bangladeshi delegation misused the opportunity of an Executive Board member by misinforming the Plenary about the repatriation of the displaced persons of Rakhine State. Myanmar is working closely with Bangladesh for the quick repatriation of the displaced persons through bilateral agreements. The Government of Myanmar has taken all necessary measures; that is why, since 23 January 2018, Myanmar has been ready to receive the verified returnees. It is the date the two sides have agreed to start the repatriation process in accordance with ‘the Arrangement on Return of Displaced Persons’ between the two countries.

Mr. Chair,

Since it joined UNESCO on 27 June 1949, Myanmar has always been a responsible member state of the Organization. We will continue to adhere to its founding principles and maintain the good tradition of the Organization.

I thank you.

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