

205TH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD OF UNESCO

ADDRESS BY MR FUAD IBRAHIM OMER DEPUTY PERMANENT DELEGATE OF ETHIOPIA TO UNESCO

Madam President of the General Conference,
Mr. Chairperson of the Executive Board,
Madam Director-General,
Excellencies, Dear Colleagues,

Let me start by congratulating you as a whole together with the Secretariat, on your concerted efforts in organizing this session of the Board and for your consistent hard work to guide us in our discussions with very clear documents and I would not pass without mentioning how much I appreciate the format of presentation of the provisional agenda.

Madam director General,

UNESCO being a pioneer in many of UN reforms in the past, I would like to commend your effort in leading UN's current reform, we appreciate and fully support your vision.

Let me use this opportunity to thank you and DDG for the creative way chosen to inform us regularly on the reform with the newsletter, this indeed shows a sharper way of communicating and that pillar 2 of the strategic transformation is already bearing its fruits.

While I appreciate the operational strategy, as a member State, my focus would be the content and what I would like to see at the end of this transformation process.

Education is still at the forefront of our development agenda in view of achieving the Ethiopia we want. UNESCO's work in the field of Education is very important for us and we really appreciate the work of both the HQ and the Category 1 Institutes in this regard.

However, as a member State, I sometimes find it very easy to be lost in the different activities carried out by the Education sector. For instance, the boundaries between the different conventions in culture make it easy for member states to recognize the different scope of actions. Although we appreciate very much the functional autonomy of the different Category 1 Institutes, their different supports are interdependent while they still have their own specialization; thus synergy among themselves can lead to a better success on the ground.

It will also lead us to a better result based budgeting and feed the HR new strategic action plan allowing transparency and accountability of each unit or cluster while allocating an efficient number of both human and financial resources to each unit.

As far as pillar 3 is concerned, we understand that the High level Reflexion Group will adjust and conceptualize the content of UNESCO's different programme while consulting with the different Field Offices; I should then understand that Field Offices have also started working on the transformation agenda. However, with regards to priority Africa, we did not see any mention of it in the third component of the Strategic Transformation process concerning the programmes. I would like to ask you Madam Director General, How and in which thematic group do you plan to integrate the review of the flagship programmes of Priority Africa?

Excellences, ladies and gentlemen,

As I said earlier, Education is at the forefront of our development agenda and UNESCO has a unique role in the development of policies and sharing of best practices. For us developing countries, IBE plays a critical role in the development of our policies and we cannot allow ourselves to waste time in shaping a policy that is not adequate to our reality. IBE is a crucial partner to achieve SDG4 in view of its support in designing and delivering effective curricula as well as in recognizing and addressing critical impediments within our education system that might undermine the effectiveness of our curricula.

Madam Director General,

I would like to link the challenges of IBE to the use of the unspent fund.

We appreciate the 3 options listed in the document and in particular the option of raising extra-budgetary funding to ensure continuity.

However, in the absence of extra budgetary funding, have you taken into account the importance of IBE under the suggested 2 options in item 23?

As for Ethiopia, we have a preference for option 2 with slight revisions taking into account the budget constraint of IBE; I believe this would be a provisional solution until the transformation process delivery.

Excellences, ladies and gentlemen,

UNESCO's actions in Preventing Violent Extremism at local, regional and national level have been multiplied, PVE is very important for our continent and initiatives for young people

should remain a priority. Important works and activities have been carried out, best practices exist in particular in Africa and UNESCO should continue developing and scaling up its activities to dissemination of manuals and practical guides to enhance intercultural dialogue and to be able to have a follow-up mechanism in view of ensuring that all Member States benefits from these activities.

Since April 2018, with the election of our new Prime Minister, Ethiopia, which is a mosaic of 82 ethnicities, is embarked in a very big democratization process with the means of intercultural dialogue fostered by the interdependence of the different communities, by encouraging inclusivity and freedom of expression. And this has not only borne fruits in our country but also in our sub-region.

UNESCO's work in fostering dialogue, inclusivity and freedom of expression is important to us more than ever which is also why we support very much item 34 on Media and Information literacy proposed by Jamaica. With that I would like to go to item 36. Ethiopia fully recognizes that UNESCO is one of the UN agencies promoting successfully freedom of expression and human rights through its different field of competencies; we fully agree that the CR Committee has been and remains an important tool for that.

Finally, Ethiopia aligns itself with the statement of group V .a.

Thank you