

## **205 SESSION OF THE UNESCO EXECUTIVE BOARD**

### **DRAFT POLICY STATEMENT BY DR. MATTHEW OPOKU-PREMPEH GHANA'S REPRESENTATIVE AND LEADER OF DELEGATION TO THE 205 SESSION OF THE UNESCO EXECUTIVE BOARD**

**Paris, France**

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Chairman of the Executive Board,  
President of the General Conference,  
Director General of UNESCO,  
Distinguished Representatives,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen.

The Ghana delegation joins previous speakers to congratulate you Madam Director - General for the detailed elaboration of programs and activities of the Secretariat since your assumption of office. Ghana is happy to see your sustained efforts to deliver on the programs approved by the General Conference.

Ghana endorses the statement made on behalf of the Africa group.

Mr. Chairman, last month, Mr. Kofi Annan, the 7th Secretary-General of the United Nations, the first from sub-Saharan Africa to occupy this important position was laid to rest in his home soil of Ghana. On behalf of H.E. Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo Addo, President of the people of Ghana, I

wish to extend our heartfelt gratitude to the entire United Nations, led by the Secretary-General, His Excellency António Gutierres, and the whole international community for the outpouring of grief and condolences that we received at his passing. On this occasion Mr. Chairman, allow me to reiterate that Kofi Annan's passionate and profound belief that a stronger and better-organized United Nations would make the world a better place, is an ideal that should not be allowed to die.

On the draft budget for 2020-2021, Ghana is satisfied with the Director-General's proposal for a regular budget ceiling corresponding to Zero Real Growth, which includes 11 million USD of the unspent funds under the 38 C/5.

We also wish to commend the Director-General for the reallocation of funds to regular programme resources and believe this will cushion especially the programmes in the field from the worst effects of the budget cuts.

Mr. Chairman, Ghana supports the initiative by UNESCO IIEP to develop a vision and strategy for promoting literacy in Member States. We note the ongoing capacity building initiatives in support of countries wishing to develop their own assessment systems for tracking and reporting on SDGs.

Ghana's new Education Strategic Plan, in a move away from input based accountability, now places great emphasis on improving learning outcomes and the promotion of internal efficiency in education service delivery.

Mr. Chairman, the Ghana delegation appreciates the financial support provided by UNESCO within the framework of the World Heritage Convention for the preparation of a management plan required to restore the Forts and Castles enlisted as World Heritage Sites. This is a boon to our country's efforts. We have been a strong promoter of heritage preservation and have initiated programs at the highest level to revamp sustainable tourism at the Elmina and Cape Coast Castles.

Ghana recalls attacks on heritage sites such as in Mali and Mosul, resulting in the damage of important archival materials and monuments and see as timely, efforts by UNESCO to strengthen collaboration with other partners for ALIPH - International Alliance to Protect Heritage.

Mr. Chairman, Ghana has over the years stood behind the promotion of the Basic Sciences because we firmly believe that they hold the key to Africa's development beyond aid. Training in the sciences are the fundamental building blocks for sustainable development and job creation. We encourage UNESCO to go beyond policy support to provide resources for hands-on training, particularly for school children.

The pursuit of pure Mathematics at the advanced level has seen a gradual decline in many African countries, threatening our collective aspiration to train the needed manpower base for the continent's development. To address this challenge in the Africa region, the 39<sup>th</sup> General Conference endorsed the African Institute for Mathematical Sciences (AIMS) - Ghana, as a UNESCO Category II Centre with the objective to build an ecosystem

of Pan-African transformation that will leverage scientific innovation, learning and research to apply solutions to the continent's challenges. We look forward to working with all partners to make AIMS-Ghana a success.

In that context Mr. Chairman, allow me to finally add Ghana's voice, as co-sponsor of Draft Resolution for the declaration of **March 14 of every year** as the International Day of Mathematics. I call on all Members of the Board to support this worthy cause.

I thank you for your attention.