

**The Chairperson of the Executive Board**  
**The President of the General Conference**  
**The Director- General**  
**Honourable Government Ministers**  
**Excellencies**  
**Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen**

**Chairperson,**

I would like to offer my congratulations and best wishes to you and to the Director-General. As you seek to provide direction and pursue attainment of UNESCO's mission, you can count on my delegation's full constructive support.

Zambia cherishes the relationship it has with UNESCO which will clock 54 years on 9<sup>th</sup> November, 2018. My country has had very fruitful collaborative ties with UNESCO which has not only provided technical and material support but has also provided financial support in its key competencies.

**Education sector**

**Chairperson**

In line with Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4) Education 2030 framework, Zambia has embedded components of SDG 4 in its National Development Plan. Consequently, we are working towards formulation of a structured SDG 4 implementation plan, strategy and Committee.

To enhance acquisition of knowledge, skills, values and attitudes needed to promote sustainable development and contributing to SDG target 4.7, Zambia is implementing capacity development programmes on Global Citizenship Education and Sustainable

Development targeting Teacher Educators and In-service training coordinators. In addition, we are receiving extrabudgetary resources through the programme on capacity development for education focusing on Pedagogy and Competencies with a view to enhance quality education delivery.

In an attempt to improve sector-wide monitoring and evaluation systems, we have embarked on a five-year project with support from the World Bank which will, among other things improve Education Management Information Systems (EMIS), in addition to Teacher Quality.

**Chairperson**, with support from UNESCO, SIDA and other stakeholders, we are implementing the Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) with school related gender-based violence as one of the key components being addressed.

Another notable collaboration with UNESCO is the UNESCO-China Funds in Trust Project which is transforming two Teacher Education Institutions into Centres of Excellence in the use of Information and Communication Technology in teacher education.

**Further**, as a way of strengthening provision of quality higher education, our Higher Education Authority is working with UNESCO through the Shenzhen Project '**Strengthening Quality Assurance and Recognition Tools and Mechanisms in Higher Education in Africa: Institutional capacity building of recently established Quality Assurance agencies**".

### **Sciences sector**

**Chairperson**, my country has recognised Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) as a key driver for the country's sustained Socio-Economic Transformation. It is in this regard that my country in

partnership with the UNESCO Regional Office for Southern Africa (ROSA) held a consultative workshop on harnessing STI for Zambia's Socio-Economic transformation. The workshop identified challenges limiting the use and investment in STI to enhance socio-economic development of the country, among other things.

Other major interventions in the science sector in my country include: the review of the STI policy and Act; the training of science educators in the global micro-science experiments project; and the transformation of the National Science Centre into a Directorate.

Equally, my country has taken the crusade of campaigning against doping in sport very seriously. In view of this, teacher education colleges have been sensitized and coaches for various disciplines trained on the dangers of doping. Anti-Doping clubs have been formed within the same colleges to pursue fair play and clean sport.

We have also continued sensitizing communities and schools on negative effects of Gender Based Violence. In addition, my country is also implementing the Keeping Girls in School Programme (GEWEL Project) aimed at enhancing the retention of girls in school.

**The important role that culture plays in any development process cannot be overlooked.**

As such measures have been put in place to ensure that its rightful role in the development of the Zambian society is acknowledged. In light of this, my government has continued implementing Cultural Conventions. One such example is the 2003 Convention on the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage which, with support from UNESCO will be offering a degree programme at the University of Zambia to strengthen the capacity for the safeguarding and management of Intangible Cultural Heritage.

In addition, my country carried out a study on the Slave Trade and Slave Routes in Zambia which has culminated into a publication that should be on the UNESCO website soon. This study is important as it provided an opportunity to shed light on new and contemporary forms of slavery.

### **Communication and Information Sector (CI sector)**

**Chairperson**, my country is implementing a number of programmes in the Communication and Information sector. We are actively raising awareness and building a national campaign to support and promote freedom of expression and access to information, as undisputable human rights, while at the same time promoting media diversity, pluralism and ethical reporting through the Information for all Programme.

Working with stakeholders, we have established mechanisms for the identification, dissemination and preservation of, as well as access to Documentary Heritage, including in digital form, through the Memory of the World Programme (MoW).

**Chairperson**, despite the many successes, my country has had challenges in implementing some of these very good initiatives. The major challenges and some mitigation measures are as follows:

1. Inadequate number of qualified teachers at secondary school level especially in STEM subjects;
2. Poor and usually inadequate infrastructure despite my Government constructing 115 secondary schools and upgraded 220 primary schools into secondary schools;
3. Inadequate absorption capacity at university level, though my Government is constructing 8 universities to mitigate this challenge.

4. Disparities exist with regard to geographical location, social class, and cultural behaviour, while the plight of orphans and vulnerable children remains a major obstacle to equity in education;
5. High costs of deploying and use of ICTs; and
6. Inadequate national capacities for effective strategic planning and management of education development.

In view of the challenges my country is facing, we are ready to collaborate with other stakeholders to pursue the national developmental agenda that my Government has embarked on.

**Distinguished Ladies and gentlemen,** this session of the Executive Board is crucially important as the agenda items placed before us will require the Board to come up with a clear roadmap for this Organisation. This Executive Board needs to ensure that UNESCO responds to the challenges of the 21st century.

Three years ago, 17 Sustainable Development Goals were endorsed by the United Nations. These goals are a compass to guide our work. There is need to act and concrete activities need to be put in place to assist countries achieve this agenda.

My country supports the issues raised by Nigeria, Vice Chair of the Africa Group on the Executive Board. We want to see tangible activities in support of Africa as one of the Global Priorities of UNESCO.

Chairperson, My country is concerned about the future of the International Bureau of Education (IBE). IBE plays a critical role on matters of curriculum development. The Board will need to reflect on this matter carefully. The status of IBE as a category I Institute needs to be maintained. In this regard, my country does not support the proposal to have IBE brought to UNESCO Headquarters.

With regard to the strategic transformation, my country is of the view that Member States need to be consulted widely.

As we examine strategies to improve collection of resources, we should not focus too much on punitive measures as they have potential to divide us further.

Zambia looks forward to adding its voice to the issues that will be tabled before the Executive Board.

**I thank you, Chairperson**