

**STATEMENT TO BE DELIVERED BY THE PERMENNAET DELEGATE OF THE  
REPUBLIC OF ZIMBABWE TO UNESCO, H.E. AMBASSADOR RUDO M. CHITIGA  
DURING THE 205<sup>th</sup> SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD OF UNESCO, 9 OCTOBER  
2018**

Chairperson of the Executive Board, Mr Lee Byong-Hyun  
President of the General Conference, Mrs Zohar Alaoui  
Director-General of UNESCO, Madam Audrey Auzolay and  
Dear Colleagues,

**Chairperson,**

Let me, at the onset, associate my delegation with the statement made by the Vice President of our Electoral Group. My delegation joins other colleagues in extending our condolences and solidarity to the governments and people of Ghana and Kenya on the passing of two illustrious sons of Africa, Kofi Anan and Prof Godia.

Member States have underlined the need to allocate resources to programme implementation. We commend the Director General for listening to those concerns by allocating part of the remaining of the US\$18, 1 million from the unspent funds to programmes. The Director General's commitment to support research in Africa under the Natural Sciences sector particularly setting up the relevant structures is most welcome.

**Chairperson,**

In order for Africa to catch up with the science and technology revolution, governments are adopting science-friendly policies and making strategic investments in scientific research and innovation. The reorientation of Africa's education and training systems to meet the knowledge, skills, innovation and creativity required nurturing African core values and promoting sustainable development at the national, sub-regional and continental scale will require increased attention by UNESCO. We therefore commend the Director General for the current programmes and initiatives and urge the Secretariat to maintain this priority.

The Government of Zimbabwe's vision is to become a middle-income economy by 2030. To this end, we have given priority to education and skills that respond to the country's economic developmental challenges while also coming up with technologies that benefit present and future generations. We are currently seized with setting up technology hubs and industrial parks to ensure that science and technology drive the economy and

improve the livelihood of the people. This can only be achieved by sharing expertise within the UNESCO family. We therefore appreciate the Secretariats' efforts to revive the Basic sciences programme more so its linkages to broader STEM areas. We urge UNESCO to continue providing adequate funding and expert advice to Basic Science and STEAM Programmes. Chairperson we therefore warmly welcome the proposal for the International Mathematics Day.

**Chairperson,**

My Delegation welcomes the renewal of the UNESCO-Equatorial Guinea International Prize for Research in Life Sciences. The initiative has seen the recognition of not only African scientists and researchers but also researchers from all parts of the world. We feel proud of such an initiative and pledge our support to our compatriots, Equatorial Guinea.

On culture, my government attaches great importance on the sustainable harnessing of cultural resources for community livelihoods, economic empowerment and national development. In this regard, we appreciate the continuous guidance and support provided through UNESCO Conventions and institutions. We also welcome the decision of the World Heritage Committee to have a special focus on Africa at the 43<sup>rd</sup> Session of the Committee in Azerbaijan.

**Chairperson,**

On the reform of the Organisation, we stress the importance of the need to continue implementing the past reform efforts of the Organisation mainly the implementation of the past audit and evaluation reports, as well as strategic reviews and relevant recommendations of the open-ended working group on governance, procedures and working methods of the governing bodies of UNESCO endorsed by the General Conference at its 39th session. We acknowledge efforts to implement a number of the recommendations in particular those related to the Preparatory Group of the Executive Board which has proved to be valuable in our preparations for the Executive Board. We encourage the implementation of the remaining recommendations to ensure that the organisation and the Governing Bodies function well. We therefore reiterate the importance of these recommendations as the Secretariat embarks on the Strategic Transformation process.

We welcome the efforts made so far, and the accommodation of the concerns of member states in the elaboration of the strategic transformation process. We continue to urge the

Secretariat to co-own this process with all member states and to maintain trust between the two parties.

**Chairperson,**

Zimbabwe is proud and honoured to host the Multi-Sectoral Regional Office for Southern Africa. We salute the Regional Office's initiatives and joint programmes with the SADC Secretariat based in Botswana. You may recall that the Regional Office was established following consultations of the Ministers of Education within the SADC region. Any changes to this arrangement should be made through the same SADC Institutions.

**Chairperson,**

Let me conclude by expressing gratitude to cooperating partners for the assistance rendered to ensure implementation of various programmes in Africa. We also hope that these and other effects will contribute to the strengthening of Priority Africa.

**Chairperson** let me take this opportunity to thank you and colleagues for the excellent working relationship that I have enjoyed. As I leave my post in France, I wish you and Madame Director General the best in steering this important Organisation.

I thank you.