



14<sup>th</sup> October, 2019

**207 TH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD OF UNESCO**

**STATEMENT BY DR. TILAYE GETE, MINISTER OF EDUCATION AND SECRETARY  
GENERAL OF THE NATIONAL COMMISSION OF ETHIOPIA**

**Madam President of the General Conference,**

**Chairperson of the Executive Board,**

**Madam Director-General,**

**Excellencies, dear colleagues,**

At the outset, I would like to applaud Mr. Chairperson of the Executive Board and your team together with the Secretariat, on your tireless efforts in organizing this session of the Executive Board.

Let me also congratulate the Director-General for the documents provided, as well as for her comprehensive introduction.

Secondly, on behalf of the Government of Ethiopia and on my own, I am pleased to express our pride in being awarded the 2019 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, to His Excellency Dr. Abiy Ahmed, Prime Minister of F.D.R of Ethiopia,

This recognition is a timeless testimony to the MEDEMER ideas of unity, cooperation and mutual coexistence that the Prime Minister has been constantly championing.

Furthermore, I would like to thank UNESCO and the Jury for awarding the 2019 edition of the Félix Houphouët-Boigny Peace Prize to His Excellency Dr. Abiy Ahmed, for his actions in our Country and the region, in particular, for having been the initiator of a longstanding peace agreement between Ethiopia and Eritrea.

Likewise, Sudan's main alliance of opposition groups and protesters accept our Prime Minister as a mediator in their political deadlock with the Transitional Military Council.



In the meantime, we cannot pass without thanking the Director-General for her words of warm congratulations addressed to His Excellency the Prime Minister during her official visit to Ethiopia on the occasion of 2019 World Press Freedom Day,

**Excellencies, dear colleagues,**

Freedom of expression and the access to information and knowledge are essential for sustainable development, as a matter of fact, every year, May 3rd is a date which UNESCO celebrates the fundamental principles of press freedom to evaluate press freedom around the world, to defend the media from attacks on their independence, and to pay tribute to journalists who have lost their lives in the exercise of their profession.

To this end, it is a great honor and privilege for Ethiopia to host 2019 World Press Freedom Day, and I would like to reiterate my thanks to all the participants without whom the event would not have been such a success!

**Excellencies, dear colleagues,**

Ethiopia is a rich cultural mosaic of various Nations and Nationalities and languages. In the past decades, nine World Heritage sites, three intangible Heritages and three biosphere reserves were inscribed.

Accordingly, Ethiopia attaches great importance to the work of UNESCO in both tangible and intangible heritage conservation and protection.

In this context, our sincere gratitude goes to the government of France, the World Heritage Centre and its advisory bodies for all their support in the management of our heritage sites and for all the work, which are currently being undertaken to the preservation and restoration of the Rock-Hewn Churches of Lalibela.

**Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates**

As you all might be aware, climate change is a global complex problem, however, it may not be too late to limit global warming and to avoid some of the worst effects of climate change, under our Prime Minister's strategic guidance, Ethiopian were mobilized to be actively involved in tackling of environmental problems.

In this sprit and as part of national "green legacy" initiative, in a single day in July 29th 2019, about 350m trees and 3.72 billion trees in four months have been planted in Ethiopia this year.



**Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates**

My Delegation attaches great weight to the role of UNESCO's global initiative on the Futures of Education and to the high-level panel that has been held during the 74th session of the General Assembly of the United Nations which aims to generate a debate among Heads of State, as well as with partners, on how knowledge and learning can best be mobilized for the future of humanity and the planet.

In this perspective, Ethiopia appreciates UNESCO for the confidence, which has honored H.E MS. Sahle-Work ZEWDE the president of FDR of Ethiopia in entrusting her with chairing of the International Commission on the Futures of Education,

I believe Her Excellency will be worthy of your trust throughout her assignment and I hope that she could effectively contribute to the success of this initiative.

**Madam Director-General,**

On this historical meeting, on behalf of the 28 million Ethiopian children, I would like to extend my appreciation to UNESCO for sending a mission of Education Experts to Addis Abeba, to avail expertise during the drafting of the country's Education and Training Roadmap, Which is currently being developed.

Regrettably, this year IBE-UNESCO couldn't succeed providing expertise and technical support adapted to the needs in the review process of our curricula, while understanding the financial challenges facing IBE, my delegation joins those who are very concerned by the complexity of IBE, We therefore, urge UNSECO to explore all possible options to ensure the continued existence of IBE, and we encourage Member states and collaborative partnerships to support its advancement.

**Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,**

Much has been said, but I would just like to highlight that the reform of the governance of UNESCO needs to be consensus-driven with regard to the proposed amendment to Article V, paragraph 4 of the Constitution, particularly the term limits of Executive Board, therefore, the proposed amendment to the Constitution must be finalized after the implications and consequences have been carefully assessed.

**Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,**

Ethiopia commends the Director General, and the Secretariat for its efforts considering the progress achieved so far in the Strategic Transformation.



On the other hand, continuing efforts should be made to enhance the transparency and openness of UNESCO's work.

### **Excellences, Distinguished Delegates**

I wish to draw the attention of Member states, to document dated on 3<sup>rd</sup> of October 2019, containing a draft amendments to UNESCO's Constitution regarding improved measures for assessed contributions; proposal for their implementation.

These measures are a key step in making UNESCO effective and accountable.

It is now more than ever evident that UNESCO needs new and effective strategies for mobilizing extra budgetary resources to carry out its activities. Considering the fact that, it is a common responsibility that should be shared by the Secretariat and the member states. We would like to underscore the importance of pursuing the matter even more vigorously

Furthermore, UNESCO should keep reforming the Organization on the go and continue to secure its mandate in all its fields of competence including, preventing violent extremism through education, empowering women and girls, protecting and preserving the world's heritages, contributing to lasting peace by protecting Human Rights and the safety journalists, contributing to sustainable development and the eradication of poverty

In this regard, I would like to assure that Ethiopia is strongly committed to UNESCO's constitution, and to working with Member States towards the achievement of its goals.

In conclusion, Ethiopia aligns itself with the statement to be delivered by the Africa Group V (a).

I thank you for your attention