

207TH SESSION OF UNESCO EXECUTIVE BOARD

**POLICY STATEMENT BY DR. MATTHEW OPOKU PREMPEH, GHANA
REPRESENTATIVE AND LEADER OF DELEGATION**

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

Ghana associates herself with the statement of the Africa Group and join previous speakers to congratulate you, Madam Director – General, for the successes achieved so far, in the **Strategic Transformation process of UNESCO.**

We note efforts to re-organize the internal structures of the Secretariat with a view to foster greater synergy and strengthen management culture for a more effective service delivery.

Ghana is confident that your determination will ultimately result in a more strengthened UNESCO, well positioned within the UN system, to respond effectively to contemporary global challenges in the areas of its competence. In that context, we support the proposed budget scenario of **USD 534 Million ceiling.**

Mr. Chairman, as part of our collective efforts to achieve SDG4 through a new Medium - Term Strategy (41 C/4) and the accompanying C/5s, **the Government of Ghana is proposing to upgrade to a Category II status, the Institute for Educational Planning and Administration (IEPA) of the University of Cape Coast, Ghana.** This proposal is contained in Agenda Item 15.1 of this session.

By this proposal Mr. Chairman, the IEPA intends to expand to the West Africa region and beyond, its work of educational planning and research, policy formulation and training for educational leadership. **The Government of Ghana will contribute a total of 3.4 million dollars annually towards the operations of both the proposed IEPA Centre and the AIMS-Ghana Category II Institute under the auspices of UNESCO.** We call on all Member States to support this proposed initiative which will transform educational planning and address human resource and systems needs of countries in the region.

Mr. Chairman, as a strong advocate of the basic sciences, Ghana participated in the observation of the first global celebration of International Day of Light culminating in the opening of the first Museum of Light in Ghana. We are also co-sponsors of the proposed International Day of Mathematics. In that context, Ghana delegation supports Item 45 on the proclamation of the year 2022 as the International Year of the Basic Sciences for Development. We call on all Member States to join in this endeavour.

Mr. Chairman, the negative impact of climate change on our biodiversity is being increasingly felt the world over. There is the need for the MAB programme to strengthen its focus on research in this area, in particular landscape restoration. This will promote conservation, rehabilitation and protection of endangered species. We therefore call on Member States to contribute to the Afri-bio Fund.

Mr. Chairman, the recent fact finding mission to Ghana to discuss areas of collaboration in establishing earthquake monitoring and early warning systems is greatly appreciated. Ghana looks forward to UNESCO's assistance to strengthen our newly formed Committee on earthquake and early warning systems.

Ghana has recently initiated projects at the highest level to revamp Elmina and Cape Coast Castles towards sustainable tourism. As a strong promoter of Culture and Heritage protection, we take note of the recommendations of the World Heritage Committee at its 43rd session on these projects and have taken concrete steps to address the Committee's concerns.

Indeed, the importance of these historic monuments to Ghana cannot be overemphasized as it symbolizes significantly and emotively the continuing history of Europe- America -Africa relations. They also mark the starting point of the African diaspora on which rests UNESCO Slave Route project which celebrates its 25th Anniversary this year.

Similarly, Mr. Chairman, Ghana continues to play key role in the Pedagogical Use of the General History of Africa which 9th Volume has recently been released and the curriculum framework developed by UNESCO. We look forward to see its implementation in African schools.

It is worth mentioning, that, His Excellency the President of Ghana, **Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo declared 2019 as the 'Year of Return' in commemoration of the 400th Anniversary of the arrival of the first African slaves in the English Colony of Jamestown.** We are grateful to UNESCO and partners for the support received in the celebration of the 2019 Year of Return in Ghana.

Finally, let me use this opportunity to invite you Mr. Chairman and all delegations and friends of **Ghana to a reception this evening at 6pm. The venue is the Cafeteria on the 7th Floor.**

I look forward to welcoming you all and thank you for your attention.