

**SPEECH BY H.E. PHYLLIS KANDIE, EGH, AMBASSADOR AND PERMANENT DELEGATE OF THE REPUBLIC OF KENYA TO UNESCO, ON THE OCCASSION OF THE 207<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD OF UNESCO, MONDAY, 14 OCTOBER 2019**

---

Mr. Chairman,  
President of the General-Conference,  
Madam Director-General,  
Excellencies, Dear Colleagues,

Let me from the outset congratulate the Prime Minister of the Federal Republic of Ethiopia, His Excellency Abiy Ahmed Ali, for winning the Nobel Peace Prize.

The relevance and credibility of UNESCO hinges to a large extent on the impact the Organization has in improving people's lives. Kenya concurs with the Director-General on the need to ensure that UNESCO has adequate resources to deliver on its mandate of laying the foundations of lasting peace and sustainable development. We further laud the Director-General's efforts to enhance the impact and visibility of UNESCO including through the events held during the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA).

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development has reaffirmed the vital role of the ocean for the future of humanity. It is against this background that Kenya and Portugal will co-host the Second United Nations Ocean Conference to be held in June 2020 in Lisbon. Further, in collaboration with Portugal and the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC), we are organizing a high-level ocean side event to be held during the upcoming General Conference.

The side event seeks to galvanize action towards the realization of the SDG 14 and the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021-2030).

**Mr. Chairman,**

Two decades have passed since the introduction of Priority Africa. Time is ripe to review the Priority Africa Agenda to address prevailing challenges and also to seize new opportunities. Kenya is keen to contribute to its re-conceptualization so as to further strengthen alignment with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Africa Union's Agenda 2063. Further, we call on the Director-General to entrench gender equality across all the major programmes.

Kenya appreciates UNESCO's multidisciplinary approach to Artificial Intelligence (AI) and its potential to support development notably in Africa. We therefore call on UNESCO to organize sub-regional forums to facilitate the exchange of ideas, development of strategic frameworks and action plans so as to build capacity at the national and regional levels.

**Mr. Chairman,**

Sport is a valuable tool for fostering social cohesion, respect and tolerance. Kenya remains deeply committed to UNESCO's mandate in the promotion of ethics and values related to physical education and clean sports. Kenya is keen to host the next International Conference of Ministers and Senior Officials Responsible for Physical Education and Sport (MINEPS) which has never been held in Africa.

Kenya is also convinced that the youth represent a formidable resource that can provide solutions for sustainable, inclusive and peaceful societies. We urge the Director-General to foster youth participation in the design and delivery of UNESCO's programmes including through the upcoming UNESCO Youth Forum.

Kenya is also pleased to collaborate with UNESCO in mainstreaming the General History of Africa into the school curricula. This will advance a deeper knowledge and appreciation of our heritage from an early age.

**Mr. Chairman,**

Culture is a crucial enabler for youth empowerment and sustainable development. Kenya welcomes the first ever Forum of Ministers of Culture to be held during the General Conference. We are convinced that the Forum is timely as it will foster global discourse on the role of culture for sustainable development.

Kenya fully subscribes to the importance of Biosphere reserves, Geoparks and World Heritage sites as learning sites for inclusive and comprehensive approaches for sustainable development. We further commend the International Hydrological Programme (IHP) for supporting Member States respond to challenges of water security, climate change, drought and other related challenges.

**Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Kenya greatly values the contribution of the UNESCO Institute of Statistics (UIS). Timely production, collection, analysis and dissemination of data is key for the design and implementation of policies in support of the SDG framework. Kenya therefore seeks to contribute to these efforts by joining the Governing Board of the UIS. Your support is highly appreciated.

**Finally,**

Kenya aligns with the Africa Group Statement delivered by Nigeria, Vice-President for Africa in the Executive Board.

**Thank you for your attention**