



CHAIR OF THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT UNESCO CHAPTER



STATEMENT TO BE DELIVERED BY THE PERMANENT DELEGATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN, ON BEHALF OF THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT AT THE 209TH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD OF UNESCO

Paris, July 2, 2020

Azerbaijan takes the floor in its capacity as the Chair of the Non-Aligned Movement on behalf of NAM/UNESCO Chapter to express its serious concern over the rapid spread of COVID-19, which poses a major challenge to humanity and requires a global response based on unity, solidarity and renewed multilateral cooperation.

Throughout its history, the NAM has played a fundamental role in strengthening international peace and security, in accordance with Bandung principles, such as, respect for the sovereignty, territorial unity and territorial integrity of states, non-interference in internal affairs and the right to self-determination of peoples, international cooperation and solidarity. These Principles were reaffirmed at the Online Summit Meeting of the NAM Contact Group in response to COVID-19 on 4 May 2020.

NAM reaffirms its determination to promote peace, tolerance and respect for cultural diversity, to address challenges to shared values and universal human rights, and to fight against inequalities, racism, discrimination, stereotyping and prejudices, through cooperation, partnership, inclusion, as well as capacity-building and governance.

NAM underlines the intergovernmental character of UNESCO, while recalling the importance of the Governing Bodies of the organization to continue working and exercising their functions in accordance with UNESCO Constitution in order to, inter alia, take decisions in all circumstances.

NAM emphasizes the importance of UNESCO's capacity- building activities and assessment of the impact of these activities on the ground, and believes that it should be a priority in the future Mid-Term Strategy of C/4 and C/5.

NAM acknowledges the central role of UNESCO in the protection of cultural heritage and calls upon the Organization to promote, support and strengthen the implementation of the 1970 Convention on the illicit trafficking of the cultural property. The NAM condemns deliberate destruction of cultural heritage, looting and pillaging of cultural property, illegal archaeological

excavations and any alteration to cultural heritage as serious crimes against the history and identity of the peoples of the world.

NAM underlines the need to strengthen the implementation of the Memory of the World Programme and welcomes UNESCO's efforts to support documentary heritage.

NAM supports the Education 2030 Agenda and calls for intensifying efforts to create literate communities and societies, including among women and girls with respect to gender equality and priority Africa, using all existing programmes and mechanisms of UNESCO.

NAM reiterates its call for an end to the illegal Israeli occupation and for the realization of justice and the inalienable rights, including educational and cultural rights, as well as legitimate national aspirations of the Palestinian people, including to self-determination and freedom in their sovereign and independent State of Palestine, with East Jerusalem as its capital.

NAM also urge states to refrain from promulgating and applying unilateral coercive measures that impede the full achievement of economic and social development of sovereign States, particularly developing countries.

Thank you.