

**Draft Statement Special Session Executive Board  
8 June 2020**

Thank you Mr. Chairman,

Madam Director General,

President of the General Conference,

Indonesia commend your initiative, Mr. Chairman, for convening this virtual special session.

COVID-19 has deep and far reaching consequences, including on education, children, teachers, dan the working of the UNESCO.

Its impact will be felt, far beyond the pandemic is over.

It is therefore important for member states to address the multidimensional impact of the COVID-19 pandemic to the work and role of UNESCO.

To this end Indonesia would like to highlight three points.

**First**, UNESCO must engage the international community to ensure education remains an integral part of countries economic and development programs and strategy during and post COVID-19.

We must not only prioritize on immediate impact, but also address long term impact such as education.

The Pandemic must not result in the regress of education of future generation.

In Indonesia, while almost all Ministry's budget was cut. Budget for education and Culture was increased dramatically.

**Second**, UNESCO through its role in education, science, culture, and information, must contribute towards a new normal.

UNESCO programs must contribute to mitigation and adaptations of the pandemic, and to new ways of conducting business.

Indonesia for example will be implementing a combination of physical attendance and virtual learning in as a permanent fixture in our school system.

We have also foster the creativity of cultural workers during pandemic by facilitating them to perform their work virtually.

During the pandemic, free and independent press as well as safeguarding journalists is critical. Their work will ensure we make well-informed decisions, avoid paranoia, fear, and negatively stigmatising others.

**Third**, business as usual can no longer be the norm. UNESCO must be innovative in undertaking its work, including through the use of virtual meeting as a regular or permanent fixture.

This will allow better inclusiveness.

It is a milestone, when the Indonesian delegation can join us from more than 4 different locations on the other side of the world, including **Mr. Arief Rachman**, Executive Chairman of the Indonesian National Commission.

Finally, Indonesia with Group 4 is working towards a document for the 209 Executive Board, that expresses UNESCO member states views on the current challenges broad about by COVID-19.

Thank you.