

**STATEMENT BY H.E. PHYLLIS KANDIE, EGH, AMBASSADOR AND
PERMANENT DELEGATE OF THE REPUBLIC OF KENYA TO UNESCO,
ON THE OCCASION OF THE 6TH SPECIAL SESSION OF THE
EXECUTIVE BOARD OF UNESCO, MONDAY, 8 JUNE 2020**

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

This special session of the Executive Board is taking place under extraordinary times for humanity, under COVID-19, placing UNESCO at the center of the recovery. This avails us an opportunity to protect the gains we have made, draw on our experiences and reshape the future into a new era beyond COVID, based on an inclusive, innovative and human based approach that leaves no one behind. The relevance and credibility of UNESCO therefore hinges to a large extent on the ability to remain agile and provide practical solutions in the field.

More than ever before, the world needs strong solidarity and multilateralism under COVID-19. It calls for cooperation and not competition and the need to re-shape the future beyond COVID based on equity, equality, intended to leave no one behind. Kenya is strongly committed to foster cooperation with all its stakeholders in order to create a better response to the pandemic.

It is instructive to note that the pandemic opens up new opportunities in our push to attain SDGs goals. Let's seize the opportunity to support UNESCO's role in building the future.

Together we are our greatest resource. Kenya deeply appreciates the efforts by the Ambassadors of Morocco and Switzerland to facilitate consensus on the items to be examined at this special session. We are of the opinion that the existing rules and procedures contain a good part of the solutions; the issue is therefore to see how best these rules can be adapted to a virtual session.

Finally, Kenya appreciates the efforts by the Director-General to support Member States in all UNESCO's areas of competence. UNESCO's recent study on the socio-economic and cultural impacts of COVID-19 on Africa has highlighted that the effects of this pandemic will be deep and profound in many societies in Africa. Time is therefore ripe to review the implementation of Priority Africa in order to address challenges but also seize new opportunities.

Thank you for your attention