

**(Check against delivery)**

**NATIONAL STATEMENT**

**BY**

**MALLAM ADAMU ADAMU,**

**HONOURABLE MINISTER OF EDUCATION AND PRESIDENT,  
NIGERIAN NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR UNESCO,  
AT THE 39<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE GENERAL CONFERENCE OF  
UNESCO, UNESCO HEADQUARTERS, PARIS, FRANCE 30<sup>TH</sup>  
OCTOBER – 14<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER, 2017**

Madam President of the General Conference,

Mr. Chairperson of the Executive Board,

Madam Director-General,

Your Excellencies, Honourable Ministers,

Ambassadors, Permanent Delegates,

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

I bring you greetings from the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, His Excellency, President Muhammadu Buhari, GCFR and the people of Nigeria, and warm wishes for a successful session.

Madam President,

We congratulate you on your election and we look forward to your guidance throughout our deliberations.

Let me also thank H.E. Honourable Stanley Mutumba Simataa, for his efficient leadership as President of the 38<sup>th</sup> session. You have indeed made Africa proud!

Madam Director-General,

Nigeria has valued working with you and we appreciate the growth of the cooperation between Nigeria and UNESCO during your stewardship, especially, the MoU signed between Nigeria and UNESCO in 2016 and look forward to its full implementation. We wish you all the very best for the future.

Excellencies,

UNESCO continues to move forward in concert with the other agencies of the United Nations system to maintain its rightful place as a vital institution of the system, dedicated to the service and interests of its member states.

Nigeria therefore applauds all the efforts of the Organization to improve its efficiency and to generate all the means essential for fulfilling its mandate.

In this context we look forward to the Report of the Evaluation of the Intersessional meetings of the Executive Board and that of the Working Group on Governance.

Madam President,

The government of Nigeria is committed to ensuring that Nigeria achieves the targets set for SDG 4, and all the other 16 goals, by the year 2030. We have concluded a review of educational planning processes to ensure the integration of SDG 4 in the education sector plans at both national and state levels. Our focus is the re-positioning of our educational system for sustainable development and the production of human capital with the requisite skills for the 21<sup>st</sup> century knowledge-driven economy.

Furthermore, we recognise that sound policy-making, planning, monitoring and evaluation require credible data. Consequently, the *Nigeria Digest of Education Statistics, 2014 – 2016*; and the *Education Indicators 2016* were recently published to guarantee reliable and timely statistical data for the sector.

Although we are still confronted with the adverse effects of insurgency in the North East, we have deployed initiatives that address education in emergency situations through concerted efforts. In this regard, I am happy to report that our Safe School Initiative has been largely successful.

Excellencies,

Nigeria appreciates the technical support of UNESCO in the planning of the proposed International Conference on Lake Chad which should lead to a comprehensive programme of action to save the lake from extinction and bring back the means of livelihood of the people. We also call for the strengthening of the MOST Programme to address some of the social and economic challenges emanating from the aftermath of the insurgency and climate change.

In September, Nigeria successfully hosted the 5th session of the General Assembly of the Africa Network on Man and the Biosphere (AfriMAB). One of the key recommendations of the Assembly was the establishment of the AfriBio Fund as a sustainable funding mechanism for the Network. We look forward to the support of member states for the adoption of the Draft Resolution at this session.

Excellencies,

Nigeria places great importance to the UN Resolution on the safety of journalists and the issue of impunity and thank UNESCO for the recent training of African judges on the legal framework of freedom of expression, access to information and safety of journalists.

Madam President,

Nigeria has fully participated in all the consultations that eventually produced the consensus on the budget of the organization for the next biennium.

However, we note the limited funds available in the 39 C/5 for Basic Sciences. Given the great importance of Basic Sciences, particularly for developing countries, we would make a plea that innovative efforts be made to find more funds for this programme.

Once again, I wish you a very successful session.

Thank you for your attention.