

Statement of

Ms. Duriya Amatavivat, Secretary-General of the Thai National Commission for
UNESCO

at the Sixth Special Session of the UNESCO Executive Board, June 8, 2020

Mr. Chairman,
Madam Director – General,
Distinguished Board Members,

First, I would like to express our appreciation to the Chair and Secretariat for the excellent preparation for this meeting. My thanks also go to the Ambassadors of Morocco and Switzerland in facilitating this virtual meeting.

A recent global pandemic has warned us that the number of threats, to peace, stability and prosperity, is on the rise. As for Thailand, we have taken this issue very seriously since January and immediate actions have been imposed in controlling the outbreak. Currently, a state of emergency is still underway, and will continue until at least the end of this month. At this point, the number of daily infections has been significantly reduced and deaths from COVID-19 are minimal.

COVID-19 has significantly affected our ways of life and it will definitely create the “New Normal”. This is precisely the time for UNESCO and Member States to be united and capitalize on multilateralism and strong relationships with partners. During this crisis, Thailand is grateful for digital platforms provided by UNESCO as well as its efforts and response to the COVID-19 crisis, especially the intervention and accomplishments leading towards the 2030 Agenda. With this “New Normal”, more constructive communication and coordination between the Secretariat and Chair, as well as the Board Members is mandatory required. We recommend the Secretariat to keep Board Members regularly informed regarding its operation to enable us to provide valuable inputs for project implementation to respond to Member States’ needs, especially those having an impact on the use of UNESCO’s budget.

More importantly, over the past 2 years, a number of projects have been identified that require improvements and changes to help realize the 2030 Agenda. To meet these extremely urgent and ambitious objectives, it is important for us to ensure that the budget allocation is in line with UNESCO mandate and key functions. We can achieve many great things if we pool together our resources and reallocate them directly to projects. This will lessen the rigid structure of budget distribution that prevents us from achieving our objectives.

Thank you.
