

URUGUAY intervention

Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs Mrs. Carolina ACHE

Thank you very much, Mr. President,

Madam Director-General,
Dear colleagues,

We are greatly pleased that the Board can meet, even exceptionally, and I would like to thank the efforts of everyone who has made it possible.

- Uruguay wishes to convey the expressions of solidarity with all the victims of this pandemic, their families and all affected countries and peoples.

- Since the beginning of the epidemic, Uruguay has closely followed how it impacted on every sector of UNESCO and how this situation puts health services of our countries to the test while it delays economic and social development of the international community in general.

- Uruguay's experience in managing the epidemic and the transition to a new normality -an experience that we can share- matches UNESCO's approach in many ways, particularly in decision-making based on the recommendations of scientific teams, distance learning, the promotion of quality and honest information, support for the culture area and the situation of artists.

- At the same time, we must ensure that our response to the crisis includes an ethical dimension and respect for human rights, mainly freedom, and in the case of Uruguay, using mostly voluntary measures such as "stay at home" and currently, social distancing.

- The vital importance of UNESCO's action in the field has been also brought to light in this crisis.

- We are certain that the role of Field Offices in supporting the demands of each country in UNESCO's areas of competence is essential. Regional offices in Latin America and the Caribbean are a clear example of this.

- UNESCO's response to the crisis was quick and had to be envisioned and implemented in full urgency. We must now project beyond this stage and articulate the Medium-Term Strategy that will place us on a more sustainable and resilient development path, in line with the principles of the Organization, the 2030 Agenda and what was agreed by the General Conference.

- In this sense, the voice and action of the Executive Board is essential; the Board cannot be inactive.

Thank you very much.