Mr. President of the Executive Board,
Mme. President of the General Conference
Mme. Director-General
My dear colleagues

As we approach the 40th General Conference, Brazil considers this session of the Executive Board as an opportunity to revisit the core values of UNESCO.

The attachment to the principles of dignity, equality and mutual respect, as well as the promotion of understanding are essential elements to build the defenses of peace in the minds of men and women.

As a founding member of UNESCO, Brazil has acted the last 74 years, guided by those principles and has significantly contributed to international cooperation in education, sciences, culture and communication.

From time to time, UNESCO´s Constitution is subject to changes in order to reflect the dynamism of
circumstances. At this right moment, three new changes are under discussion, with different motivations and some contradictions.

On the one hand, an amendment aims at limiting the democratic right of countries to launch candidatures to the Executive Board, a challenge to the values we espoused in the Constitution. Another amendment weakens the Board by extinguishing its right to elect the Director-General. A third amendment would impose new penalties to members in arrears with the suppression of the right to vote at the Board. As we all know, developing countries are the most vulnerable to internal political downturns, economic crisis, natural disasters, and adverse international circumstances. To subject those countries to new judgement every six months would disproportionately affect them.

Brazil respects the sovereign rights of countries to propose improvements to the Organization and considers all proposals as legitimate. However, changes to the Constitution should take into consideration the position of
all member states and deserve the broadest possible consensus.

Divisions and polarizations may undermine the principles of solidarity and the democratic spirit of the charter of this Organization.

Madame Director General,

Brazil believes that this is a moment to strengthen and revitalize UNESCO, so that it can face the challenges of the XXIst century. Unity should be our main strategy if we really want a stronger UNESCO.

This year the strategic transformation process reaches its third and most important phase. Brazil remains committed to supporting this project.

We congratulate you, Mme. Director General, for the progress achieved. In this context, we welcome the International Commission on “The Futures of Education”
and the High Level Reflection Group and remain open to contribute to the success of these mechanisms.

Brazil looks forward to the next Forum of Ministers of Culture aiming at outlining common strategies to reinvigorate UNESCO´s cultural dimension.

Mr. President,

Brazil´s active role in the World Heritage Committee reflects our strong engagement with the protection of cultural and natural heritage.

The Brazilian city of Santos is proud to organize the XIV Conference on Creative Cities in 2020. Likewise, Rio de Janeiro is honored to be UNESCO´s first World Capital of Architecture and is actively engaged in organizing events in this context.

Recalling the importance of Artificial Intelligence, São Paulo will host, on 12 and 13 December 2019, the Regional Forum on AI to discuss national strategies to
face the challenges and opportunities posed by new technologies in Latin America and the Caribbean.

In the framework of the UN Decade of Ocean Science, Brazil will host, in Rio de Janeiro, next November, the South-Atlantic Workshop, to identify priorities on scientific research, training and capacity building.

Dear colleagues,

I conclude with an appeal for greater unity around the values we share on behalf of the strengthening of this noble Organization.

Thank you very much.