

Toward a New Momentum
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Preamble

My education and career have often brought me in close contact with the world's "fruitful diversity of cultures" - the very cultures which unite under UNESCO's roof, where the most diverse cultural expressions coexist. I have pursued comprehensive studies in Arab universities (in Egypt and Lebanon) as well as Western (in France and the United States), and was appointed ambassador to several countries in Europe and the Americas.

I consider myself a citizen of the world, and believe that a unifying and consensual spirit of understanding and harmony should drive my efforts aimed towards imparting UNESCO with **a new momentum**.

A diplomat from an Arab country leading this Organization for the first time in its history would be a most precious opportunity to reinforce multilateral cooperation, and to remind us of the common destiny of Mankind. Of all, it is UNESCO's universal vocation that will move forward with new vigor.

THE FUTURE OF UNESCO

Toward a new momentum!

The world has changed tremendously since the inception of UNESCO, seventy years ago – a change that may have been even more brisk since the beginning of the 21st century.

The need for multiculturalism becomes evident, as does the rightful protection of cultural identities.

Millions of youth, of women, of people suffering on this earth gradually lose hope by virtue of deplorable living conditions in all regards. The shadow of these ills extends ceaselessly, often with tragic consequences: mass migrations, cultural isolationism and a surge of fanaticism and terrorism. We find ourselves facing a crisis of values threatening the world at large.

Let us imagine this **new momentum** together!

EDUCATION

Education first! For all!

UNESCO is facing a responsibility of historical proportions. It is our duty to massively magnify its engagement towards education. It feels to me that this engagement is one of our *raison d'être*, today more than ever.

I feel bolstered by all programs dedicated to provide and improve education worldwide. UNESCO in partnership with several countries and NGOs has already implemented many programs that command respect and due recognition. I am pleased that my country is among those that fund education on a global scale.

It is imperative to develop our action towards women's education in the entire world, taking great care not to overlook the regions mired in ignorance, which breeds all fanaticism and impedes all economic growth. Gender equality is important in all fields, but in education it is even more essential.

We will work together towards multiplying the opportunities for education in Africa, Asia and the Caribbean, and to sustain UNESCO's efforts in the struggle against the phenomenon of early school dropout – efforts which have already borne success in several Latin American countries.

In support of these goals, we intend to develop partnerships between states, institutions, and the world's best universities to finance the education of millions of children of both genders in underprivileged areas, and the distribution of high-standard know-how wherever possible. We will leverage all available technological means to combat the educational wastelands plaguing the poorest regions of our planet.

Without education one cannot hope for dialogue, and without quality schooling, one cannot create a better quality of life for the future generations.

SCIENCE AND UNESCO

Serving Mankind

This is a topic particularly dear to my heart, and it is of the utmost importance for UNESCO to continue interacting with hubs of contemporary expertise. This collective brain we call UNESCO needs men and women of knowledge to pursue its mission and continue gifting the sum of intellectual and scientific human progress to all. The international scientific community also needs UNESCO, as it represents none other than its collective conscience - an entity which supplies their independent researches with its ethical dimension.

We will favor assembling a panel of experts, while promoting academic exchanges, the networking of researchers and connections with the potential to yield concrete and immediate applications in all fields that could determine the future of Mankind such as water management, oceans, global climate...) Particularly since it is a field in which UNESCO has already received notable praise with its Agenda for a global early warning system.

Furthermore, we will do everything to make advanced scientific knowledge available to the greatest number, advocating for a more open and transparent science while being respectful of intellectual property.

Since science and education must be at the service of sustainable development, I intend to support African and South-American countries, not to forget island nations. We will launch partnerships aimed at fostering progress in the realms of sustainability and the fight against natural disasters since these serve the interest of the international community as a whole.

HERITAGE

A treasure and a responsibility

World heritage is UNESCO's recognized "brand". Thanks to world heritage, UNESCO's purview is widely known and understood.

Certain sites are hallowed locations in the history of the world. In principle, their inscription onto the UNESCO world heritage list allows for their preservation, highlighting, and for them to be offered to the knowledge of the whole world. These sites, of course, transcend national identities and religious communities.

Today, everyone is aware that the world's heritage is sometimes under threat of destruction. Our fight will be to protect these sites, monuments, manuscripts and works of art which constitute Mankind's collective treasure.

UNESCO will have to not simply satisfy itself with protecting what must be, but will also have to be at the forefront of all workshops and work sites aimed at digitizing manuscripts, rebuilding libraries and destroyed monuments, and reviving these sites which speak to the memory of all men. It will have to fully engage in the protection of natural and linguistic diversity, tangible, intangible and underwater cultural heritage.

UNESCO is the appropriate and legitimate authority on the redaction of laws protecting human heritage in all its forms, and prosecuting those who harm it.

COMMUNICATION

Freedom of expression and free flow of information

The transition from the “culture of secret information” to the “culture of total transparency” requires colossal efforts. There is still much work to be done to develop international standards and regulations that should broaden civic participation in public life, the process of decision making, and the establishment of principles for transparency, good governance and against corruption. There can be no development without creativity and renewal, and no creativity or renewal can exist without the free flow of information.

Infringing actions against the freedom of expression and access to information, attacks on journalists, creators and artists, both in conflict zones and elsewhere, remain too frequent – violations and attacks that often remain unpunished.

We should reflect upon the means to broaden the partnership with journalism schools, various public and private media, local and international civil society, experts and opinion-makers in order to bolster freedom of expression and the free flow of information and ideas.

UNESCO

An ideal place for the dialogue between civilizations

In a globalized world, interdependent but threatened by standardization and various lightning-quick threats, it is essential for UNESCO to be the permanent de-facto shelter for the dialogue of civilizations.

We will take great care to give a **new momentum** to the debate of ideas which had made UNESCO a global center for debate and reflection at the time of its inception.

UNESCO is the ideal place to converse with one another leaving all preconceptions, conventions, political rigidity and misunderstandings at the door.

We will call upon all intellectual elites of the world to gather in the Headquarters' host country around themes touching upon the dignity of the human person and multicultural paths. We will enhance partnerships with the major halls of knowledge and the international media.

It is true that the digital revolution has torn down the old ramparts and opened the way to the construction of a universal civilization founded on new human underpinnings. In this context, we should develop new and creative ways to communicate with youth and future generations using digital technologies and speaking the language that youth understand and accept. It is essential to be turned towards the future.

THE MEANS TO OUR AMBITIONS

Resource development and good governance

There is a general consensus about the fact that UNESCO faces a sharp financial crisis that requires creative solutions and innovative minds in dealing with it. Several countries from all continents donated generously to the UNESCO all along its successful journey despite the obstacles and harsh times, allowing the international organization to achieve outstanding results in education, culture and science. In this regard, all Secretaries General and their staff made exceptional achievements that I hail respectfully.

However, UNESCO needs a **new momentum** marked by innovative and creative solutions adapted to our global environment and able to remediate and mitigate the shortcomings that impede good performance. I am very confident that once we communicate adequately the noble objectives of UNESCO at a large scale, the whole world will perceive its importance – today more than ever – in building peace in the minds of men and women. Then, donors, supporters and friends will respond and provide the necessary means allowing UNESCO to fulfill its ambitions at the service of Mankind.

An organization the size of UNESCO cannot deliver its best without good governance, high transparency and accountability.

Governance encompasses all aspects of the decision-making process of an organization - from idea to implementation and assessment. It involves both formal and informal processes for the formulation of policies, the allocation of resources and the objective assessment of results. Governance structures should ensure the best stewardship of

the organization that Member States have entrusted to the General Conference, the Executive Board and the Director-General. While there is a tendency to confuse 'governance' with 'management', it is important that these roles be understood as complementary to strategic policy-making and effective and efficient operationalization of the Organization's Program and Budget through competent management. Thus, governance is not only the role responsibility of the Member States, but a joint responsibility between the Member States and the Secretariat based on accountability, transparency and responsiveness.

The relationships amongst all governance leaders must be nurtured so that the 'political' and the 'administrative' maintain trust in one another, built upon an underlying assumption of having the same ambitions of achieving the same objectives and agreed goals. When this balance is met, ultimately the Member States and all of UNESCO's other key stakeholders' expectations are met, because of effective implementation of the agreed Program outlined in the C/5 document.

Put simply, governance is based on the sharing of information - and good governance is assured when that information is appropriate, sufficient and timely. That is what I shall promise, and that is what I shall expect of every member of my Secretariat's team

**So all one day can say:
UNESCO is necessary to me!**

No one is disputing the nobility of UNESCO's ideals. But let us be realistic: if we want these ideals to inspire our action, it is up to us to make them clearly known to all audiences, in all countries. Dynamic communication regarding UNESCO's infinite potential is a prerequisite to the solidarity required for any financial mobilization.

It is of the utmost importance for UNESCO's initiatives to be better recognized and appreciated by the younger generation, large corporations, charities and philanthropic associations and the like. This improved visibility applied to all of our activities will allow for more immersive interactivity, will attract more of these entities and will encourage fundraising.

We will dream up flagship projects for the years to come, based on the cornerstone themes of the Organization (science, education, heritage), projects that will involve international entities like corporations, philanthropic associations and other donors from the outset.

We confirm our belief that UNESCO needs every country, small or big, and that every country needs UNESCO. In this regard, we will spare no effort to stay in close contact with the United States and advocate for the nation to be active under UNESCO's roof.

It's from this base that we will aim to launch this **new momentum**.