Mrs Director General,
Mr. President of the General Conference,
Mr President,
Distinguished Colleagues,

Allow me to present my deepest condolences for the thousands of lives lost so far as a result of this terrible sanitary crisis. As the pandemic seems to ease off in this part of the world after much suffering and disarray, unfortunately in my country we are now facing its worst phase, at the cost of many human lives as well as severe economic uncertainty.

Brazil recognizes the efforts undertaken by UNESCO to engage with the international community in order to help curbing the severe effects of this pandemic. In this regards, Brazil wants to strongly congratulate Mrs Director General, and through her all UNESCO’s staff, for the prompt reaction to the crisis, here in Paris and in the offices abroad. The quick development and implementation of programs and actions have helped to minimize the worst impacts of the crisis, in particular in the education area, and will, certainly, facilitate the mapping of the uncertain future that will emerge from this chaotic period.
The Organization has demonstrated adaptability and creativity and, as far as we are informed, has properly navigated in those unchartered waters in order to fulfill its mandate, emphasizing its two global priorities: Africa and gender equality. The positive answer by a variety of stakeholders must be recognized, as in the case of the Global Education Coalition.

Mr. President,

I wish to salute and warmly thank you, Mr. President, for your tireless efforts that enables us to meet today.

Brazil understands that the Executive Board, as one of the most relevant governing bodies of this Intergovernmental Organization, must be fully engaged in the reflection and decision-making processes that orient every action implemented by UNESCO. This is the reason why we favored convening the current 6th Special Session, even though we were aware of the difficulties imposed by the unfamiliarity of a non-presential meeting. We have hoped that we could have been able to reach consensus on some minimal guidelines to engage in a virtual meeting.

The extraordinary effort undertaken under your guidance, Mr. President, by both facilitators, whose work and dedication I thank and praise, showed us how complicated it is to try to adjust and adapt our methods of work to new circumstances. Nonetheless, there is no doubt, in Brazil’s perception, that the post-pandemic world will force us to increasingly engage in virtual reality. It is therefore inevitable that we increasingly take into consideration procedural rules that allow us to exercise, in the future, our responsibility as a main governing body of the organization.
Fortunately, the Secretariat has signaled to us that there is a real possibility the 209th Session of the Executive Board will take place in an almost “known” format, which I assume might become in the future a “new normal”. The option opened by the Secretariat gives us time to reflect and decide on how we should prepare and shape the Executive Board in order to continue exercising its mandate as one of the constitutional organs of UNESCO in charge, among other attributions, of examining its working programs.

The perspective of a presentational meeting at the end of the month has eased from us the burden of rushing into decisions that may impact on the Rules of Procedures of the Board in ways we do not fully grasp and whose consequences could be detrimental for the very functionality of the Board.

Mr President,

In this context, Brazil will not encourage at this stage proposals of reviewing the Rules of Procedures of the Executive Board. We believe it is important to take a step back, take note of documents EX2 and EX3 and refer their consideration to the 210th Session. Brazil is thus confident that today’s special meeting and the next formal meeting of the Executive Board in the end of June will be starting points of a long but constructive debate on the challenge of adapting working methods not only for the Executive Board but for the very future of UNESCO.

Thank you