

**Speech of Mr Liviu Pop, Minister of National Education of Romania,  
at the 39<sup>th</sup> Session of the UNESCO General Conference (2<sup>nd</sup> November 2017)**

**Madam President of the General Conference,  
Mr President of the Executive Board,  
Madam Director-General,  
Excellences,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I would like to express, from the outset, the support of the Romanian delegation for the objectives of the current session of the UNESCO General Conference, which reflect the priorities of our organization in a very complex political and strategic environment.

In my capacity as Minister of National Education of Romania, I wish to congratulate, in the name of my Government, Mrs. Audrey Azoulay on her nomination by the Executive Board as the next UNESCO Director General, and I look forward to see this nomination approved by the General Conference next week.

Mr. President,

Two years after the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the 39<sup>th</sup> Session of the UNESCO General Conference comes at a time when further concrete steps need to be taken in order to successfully reach the Sustainable Development Goals.

In this context, we highly appreciate UNESCO's leadership and support in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goal 4 - Education 2030 and its contributions to the entire Agenda.

Also, I would like to thank and congratulate the current UNESCO leadership for the draft Programme and Budget for 2018-2021, that will provide further support in accomplishing the commitments we all entered into.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Romania fully supports the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goal 4. The national strategies which Romania developed beyond 2015 in the field of

education include the targets that support this goal and therefore set concrete and tailored measures.

In order to consolidate the Romanian education system on grounds of high quality and relevance, we have started a comprehensive reform process. The design of the national curriculum on key competences, the development and mainstreaming of early childhood education and care and the revitalization of technical and vocational education and training are only some of its main components.

In addressing the rapid transformations and the new challenges of our times, we have chosen in Romania the path of innovation. Thus, we value the great potential of Information and Communications Technology in education. As a result, we introduced digital school textbooks and the study of ICT and computing at lower secondary school level. In addition, we are interested in developing the field of Open Educational Resources and we look forward to addressing it in regional and international cooperation activities.

Moreover, considering the orientation of higher education systems worldwide towards internationalization, as well as the increasing number of people pursuing academic and professional mobility, UNESCO's initiative for a Global convention on the recognition of higher education qualifications is very much welcomed.

At the same time, we must note the need for an integrated vision of scientific research as a driver for sustainable development. Romania is currently putting into practice the National Strategy for Research, Development and Innovation 2014-2020, which aim at supporting and developing economic competitiveness in line with European Union's priorities.

Needless to say, UNESCO's directions in the field of research are also integrated in our national science and innovation strategies and plans.

Furthermore, under the coordination of the Ministry of Research and Innovation, a more consistent, durable support will be given in Romania over the next period to some of the UNESCO specialized programs and fields of action, such as Man and Biosphere, Bioethics, Social Transformation Management and Oceanography.

Having said that, I would like to stress that Romania welcomes and supports the new changes regarding the status of the scientific researcher. We take the opportunity to mention that in Romania a new such status is currently being approved, which includes the provisions to be adopted within the present session of the General Conference.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Romania is closely following the evolution of the increasingly complex issues associated with the protection and promotion of cultural heritage.

As many of the heritage sites are in danger, it is our duty to support the revision of the 2012-2020 Strategic Action Plan so as to ensure real protection of UNESCO's cultural and natural heritage in case of terrorist acts, armed conflicts, natural disasters, extreme climatic phenomena and other threats.

At the same time, Romania supports the efforts of our organization to extend the UNESCO World Heritage List by a balanced, representative and credible approach.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Before drawing to a close, I wish to reiterate Romania's determination to further support UNESCO's work at all levels and to strengthen our collaboration with Member States in order to fulfil the mission of our organization.

Thank you for your attention.