



# **POLICY STATEMENT**

**TO BE DELIVERED  
BY  
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**TO THE  
36<sup>TH</sup> GENERAL CONFERENCE OF UNESCO**

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**GNC FOR UNESCO**

Madam President of the General Conference,  
Madam Chairperson of the Executive Board,  
Madam Director – General,  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished Delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen.

It gives me much pleasure to have this opportunity to address the 36<sup>th</sup> General Conference of UNESCO, this being my first time.

Allow me, first of all, to convey warm greetings from **H. E. John Evans Atta - Mills**, President and the good people of Ghana.

I must say, we have observed with admiration the leadership of our present Director – General in her effort to make the impact of UNESCO felt at the global, regional, and national levels. We would therefore like to congratulate Her Excellency, Madam Irina Bokova for the able manner she has steered the affairs of UNESCO and the remarkable makeover done to our Organisation.

The Ghana Delegation joins previous speakers in congratulating you also, Madam Katalyn Bogyay, on your election as President of the 36<sup>th</sup> General Conference of UNESCO. We in Ghana assure you of our unflinching support.

Madam President, Ghana commends UNESCO for being at the forefront of multilateral action in efforts at achieving the Education for All Goals (EFA). We further note with satisfaction, the Organization's preparatory efforts on actions beyond the 2015 target.

Madam President, in order to accelerate progress towards the EFA goals, the Government of Ghana now commits 30% of the national budget to education. This is in addition to a Dedicated Fund set-up to provide educational facilities in the country. The Government has also scaled-up access to quality basic education through the following:

- School feeding in deprived communities;
- The provision of free school uniforms and exercise books for children of school going age;
- An upward adjustment to the Ghana Schools' Capitation Grant to help reduce the education financing burden on parents;

- Expansion of educational infrastructure with respect to the construction of over 1,200 additional classrooms over a period of two years.

These initiatives have significantly increased enrolment at the basic level of education in Ghana. At the Kindergarten level for example, enrolment increased from 80.8% in 2006 – 2007 to 98.3% in 2010 – 2011.

In addressing issues on the teacher who is indeed at the centre of quality education, Madam President,

- Seven out of our 38 Diploma awarding Colleges of education run programmes on Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE);
- We have established the Ghana Teaching Council to regulate the teaching profession, while we continue to motivate teachers to keep up their morale by providing them with incentive packages.
- Distance Learning and the provision of e-learning facilities to teachers has been one way the government of Ghana has expanded access to teacher education and training without removing the teacher from the classroom.

- As a means of ensuring Information and Communication Technology (ICT) enhanced learning and relevant education in a changing world, the Government of Ghana has commenced the implementation of a policy to supply 60,000 computers to basic schools.

Madam President, the Ghana delegation notes with satisfaction, UNESCO's determination to strengthen Member States' capacity to develop and implement comprehensive and evidence – based policies for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET). Our National Council for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (COTVET) is expanding both the scope and content of TVET to ease unemployment problems facing the youth who are completing schools. We are grateful to the Government of Denmark and the World Bank for their support in this regard.

Turning now to UNESCO reforms, Madam President, the Government of Ghana notes with concern the ongoing consultations with respect to the locations of the Multi-Sectoral Regional Offices, particularly, for the West Africa Sub-Region.

Madam President, it is well established that Ghana was the first African country south of the Sahara to have hosted a UNESCO Regional Centre for Education Research and Information as far back as 1961. Further, we are currently hosting one of the largest Cluster Office on the Continent. We believe that the experience, coupled with the renowned Ghanaian hospitality could be placed at the disposal of the Organisation and therefore, consider Accra as the logical home for the Multi - Sectoral Regional Office in our Sub - Region.

Madam President, considering that climate change has moved from a mere environmental human tragedy to become a global economic issue, Ghana considers it appropriate for UNESCO to prepare the Draft Universal Declaration of Ethical Principles in relation to the issue. This, no doubt, will reinforce UNESCO's role as a credible UN Specialized Agency that promotes good environmental governance through education, science and culture. In that regard, the Government of Ghana is grateful to the Spanish Government and UNESCO for the support received for the Lake Bosomtwi Ecological Restoration Project in Ghana.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, Ghana believes that UNESCO under the present leadership will continue to provide quality assistance in its

areas of competence to improve the lives of people everywhere, particularly in Africa.

Thank You for your attention.