



204TH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD OF UNESCO

**DRAFT STATEMENT IN RESPONSE TO ITEMS 4, 5 & 16 OF THE
PROVISIONAL AGENDA¹**

**TO BE DELIVERED BY HON. DR. MATTHEW OPOKU
PREMPEH, MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND GHANA'S
REPRESENTATIVE ON THE UNESCO EXECUTIVE BOARD**

Chairman of the Executive Board,
President of the General-Conference,
Director-General of UNESCO,
Distinguished Members of the Executive Board,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Ghana delegation joins previous speakers to congratulate you, Mr. Chairman of the Executive Board and the Director-General for your elaborate introductory remarks which have indeed set the tone for this important debate.

¹ Ghana is allotted only 5 minutes for this statement. Please kindly check against time.

I am happy to inform you that Wednesday the 11th of April marks exactly 60 years since Ghana joined UNESCO. Ghana has indeed come of age at UNESCO and we wish to invite you all to join us in commemorating this important milestone. Enjoy our chocolates and traditional stoles as a token of this celebration.

Mr. Chairman, Ghana applauds UNESCO for its leadership in the implementation of the SDGs. The ongoing reforms of the Organization's working methods and processes is worthy of commendation. My delegation therefore welcomes the inclusion of Item 31 in the Agenda. This is critical to maintain UNESCO's relevance in achieving the targets of Agenda 2030.

Mr. Chairman, in UNESCO's quest for resource mobilization and new partnerships, special attention should focus on donor conditionalities which may derail the Organization's eventual achievement of priorities set by Member States. Furthermore, Ghana believes that National Commissions are best placed at the country level to facilitate contacts and provide strategic interfaces for resources mobilization. National Commissions and UNESCO Field Offices therefore have the charge to deepen relations in the most effective manner to ensure the efficient delivery of programmes at the regional and country levels.

Mr Chairman, efforts of the Africa Department at forging strategic partnerships have contributed to some financial inflows to support the Culture of Peace programme in Africa. It is our expectation that a mid-term

review of the Operational Strategy for Priority Africa will give the department new impetus .

Mr. Chairman, the Analytical Programme Implementation Report 2018 points to the achievement of 40 out of 51 Expected Results for the Major Programmes; an indication that the 38 C/5 still remained an unfinished business due partly to lack of resources. In that regard, Ghana supports the effort by the Organisation to develop the 39 C/5 Implementation Plan. We call on Member States to collectively and individually support the implementation plan by making the needed resources available in a timely manner.

My Delegation commends in particular the efforts to develop technical guidelines to integrate SDG 4 into national education systems in 10 least developed countries. This singular move has indeed, affirmed UNESCO's commitment to inclusiveness in education with a view to harnessing its transformative power to improve lives for the less privileged.

Ghana has always recognised the centrality of the teacher in providing quality education and therefore endorses UNESCO's wide-ranging efforts to assist in developing comprehensive reforms of teacher policy in Member States. We are therefore happy to be selected as one of the pilot countries in the UNESCO/NTI project.

Ghana acknowledges with gratitude UNESCO's contribution in the life sciences globally and in particular congratulates the government and people

of Equatorial Guinea for awarding excellence in this area through the international prize. The winners for the 2017 edition demonstrate a clear contribution to science for sustainable development through international cooperation.

Mr. Chairman, Ghana is happy to note the Organisation's actions focusing on building national institutional and human capacities for the implementation of the Culture Conventions. As we roll-out 39 C/5, Ghana looks forward to UNESCO's support to maximise the benefits of the 1972 Convention for the restoration of the Forts and Castles and the Ashanti Traditional Buildings serially listed on the World Heritage list.

Mr. Chairman, we recognize the importance of developing the Sustainable Tourism Management Tool and recommend its adoption by the Executive Board. We hope the pilot will be truly representative for a qualitative use of the tool. In that regard, Ghana is open to offering some of her UNESCO World Heritage Sites as well as its Marine Drive Project as piloting sites.

In conclusion, Chair, allow me to inform the Board that Ghana is proud to host this year's Global Commemoration of the World Press Freedom Day. The Guillermo Cano award is presented annually by the Director General to the recipient at this event. The President of Ghana, Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo Addo has made time to host the Director General and to assist her in presenting this UNESCO prize. The activities will take place in Accra on the 2nd and 3rd May 2018 under the theme: ***Keeping Power in Check: Media, Justice and the Rule of Law.***

Policy Statement

We look forward to welcoming as many of you as possible to observe World Press Freedom Day in our beautiful country.

I thank you for your attention.