

220th Session of the Executive Board of UNESCO

Speech by H.E. Mr. KANO Takehiro (Japan)



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Madame Chair of the Executive Board,
Madame President of the General Conference,
Madame Director-General
Excellencies, Dear Colleagues,

I would like to begin by congratulating the success of the Conference “Celebrating a Centenary of Intellectual Cooperation: From Legacy to Future Action” held in September under the leadership of the President of the General Conference.

The event reminded us of the necessity of preserving the invaluable documents of the UNESCO Archives. The legacy of the past generations who dedicated themselves to the pursuit of peace through various forms of intellectual cooperation, has inspired our generation to renew our resolve to carry on the completion of the unfulfilled mission.

Japan continues to support UNESCO's operations in a holistic manner, ranging all areas of its mandate. We will be engaged in constructive and substantive discussion on the agenda of this session of the Board, most notably 43C/5, with a view to enhancing the effectiveness of the Organization.

Madame Chair,

In this session, Japan has requested the inclusion of an agenda item on the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction with a proposed draft decision. We hope that the draft decision will be adopted by consensus, enabling UNESCO to further strengthen its response in DRR.

Japan, through actively participating in IOC, supports extensive programs in ocean science. We continue to advance discussions of developing the Recommendation on the Ethics of Neurotechnology, and capacity building related to artificial intelligence.

Japan attaches its priority to Education for Sustainable Development. During this session, we'll organize a side event showcasing good practices of ESD in partnership with Saint Kitts and Nevis, and Cabo Verde. The event will show how ESD is relevant to SIDS and provide valuable insights to other regions.

The promotion of higher education is just as important as basic education. We support the implementation of the UNESCO Global Convention on Higher Education to create an environment in which aspiring young people can learn around the world.

We commend the Secretariat's efforts to insert culture and sport in the "Pact for the Future" adopted at the UN Summit of the Future. This is an important milestone in developing post-2030 SDG agenda, where culture should be included as a standalone pillar. Japan supports UNESCO in this regard, including through active participation in the MONDIACULT Conference next year.

Japan continues to support enhancing the representativeness of the World Heritage List through various measures. In this regard, we will support an initiative to organize an international conference in Nairobi in May next year which aims to reexamine the concept and practices in the field of heritage authenticity.

UNESCO's role in Communication and Information is crucial, particularly in Africa and SIDS.

Japan has supported UNESCO's programs in capacity-building of SIDS and LDC from Africa and other regions in safeguarding their documentary heritage. We support the Memory of the World Global Policy Forum to be held this month, where various measures to ensure sustainable preservation of documentary heritage from disaster risks will be discussed.

Developing mass media in a burgeoning democracy is another area of interest for Japan.

Japan recognizes the importance of UNESCO's program to develop local broadcasting and radio stations and to provide capacity-building in South Sudan, which will contribute to its democratization process. Although

national election scheduled this year was postponed again, it is valid to take measures to enhance access to information for elections and beyond.

We remain steadfast in our support to Africa and SIDS in various sectors of UNESCO. In the case of Africa, TICAD 9 to be hosted by Japan next year will be another opportunity to pursue further cooperation in UNESCO's fields of competence.

Madame Chair,

Japan appreciates UNESCO's readiness, within its mandate, to make constructive peace-building efforts under conflict settings and we continue to support its operations in Ukraine and Gaza, among others.

Russia's full-scale aggression against Ukraine still rages on, and we are witnessing a dire situation in Gaza. Our support to UNESCO's operations in education, culture and journalism is unwavering.

Japan also wishes to express serious concern over the latest situation in Lebanon, amid the call from the international community for all parties to exercise restraint. Japan encourages UNESCO to take concrete measures in this field within its mandate.

Those ongoing conflicts should not distract our attention from other regions, notably Afghanistan, where UNESCO has significant footprints. Japan urges concerned Member States to renew their attention and support to UNESCO's programs.

Finally, Madame Chair,

Next year will mark the 80th anniversary of the adoption of the UNESCO Constitution, and its mission of "constructing the defenses of peace in the

minds of women and men” is unfortunately far from being achieved. It would be up to all of us Member States to provide guidance as well as resources to UNESCO so that this Organization can work more effectively and efficiently toward fulfilling its mission.

Thank you.

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