

Thank you, Mr. Chair,
Madam Director-General,
Excellencies and Dear Colleagues,

Let me begin with two recent examples where the importance of UNESCO's mandate was highlighted. The Nairobi Declaration of TICAD VI underlines the importance of youth empowerment. The Kurashiki Declaration by G7 Education Ministers focused on the role of education to realize harmonious coexistence. Japan is grateful for the contribution and commitment by the Director General, who actively participated in these two conferences.

This 200th session of the Board is both a challenge and opportunity for us to be engaged in a future-oriented discussion on UNESCO's activities in the current global contexts. Japan welcomes the DG's preliminary proposal of 39C/5 which puts clear emphasis on the 2030 SDGs and on the intersectoral approach. My Government created an inter-agency taskforce chaired by Prime Minister Abe, and it has commenced discussions to formulate implementation principles for Japan to promote the SDGs.

Intersectorality is a key, and intersectoral approaches should be further strengthened, in such areas as Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) and sustainability science where Japan has been taking initiatives to make full use of UNESCO's wide-ranging expertise. We welcome Member States' cross-sectoral initiatives in promoting PVE (preventing violent extremism) through education, media development and Internet.

To make full use of UNESCO's comparative advantage is a must for the Organization.

In education, UNESCO could scale up concrete actions in ESD in line with the Global Action Programme (GAP). We hope the second awarding of the UNESCO-Japan Prize on ESD will help promote such actions. We will be celebrating three laureates from Cameroun, United Kingdom and Japan. We also believe in UNESCO's role in promoting gender equality and women's empowerment through lifelong learning and technical and vocational training including STEAM. As important is UNESCO's work for children in vulnerable situations, with particular attention to refugees.

In sciences, Japan encourages cooperation across MAB, Geoparks, IOC, IHP and disaster risk reduction toward SDGs. MAB and Geoparks sites are often live examples of sustainable development, and the knowledge and experience built by local communities can contribute to water and disaster risk management in other parts of the world, enabling a global network of sustainable development.

Japan, as one of the most disaster-prone countries, has been working with UNESCO to share its expertise through assisting the formulation, and dissemination this month, of guidelines for policy makers and the creation last December of an international platform for earthquake early warning systems. The coming 5th November will mark the first Tsunami Awareness Day, and Japan will continue to cooperate with the IOC on this matter.

Japan has been earnest for the protection of culture, including cultural heritages in post-conflict/disaster areas. We hope that the proposed Action Plan of UNESCO's new Strategy will build upon the long and rich experiences of the Organization and take into account the wide-ranging interests of Member States. As to the World Heritage Convention, conservation and nomination processes are both important to protect heritage for our future generations. For the next biennium budget, we would like to ask the Secretariat to come up with a draft allocating sufficient resources to this flagship programme.

Finally, in the CI Sector, we renew our support to UNESCO's role in such areas as the safety of journalists. We would also like to stress the need for strengthening UNESCO's work to preserve and provide universal access to documentary heritage. As to the Memory of the World Programme, active participation of all interested parties in the online consultation of its Review is encouraged so that it can further promote friendship and mutual understanding among Member States.