

Position paper - UNESCO

The topics which we will be discussing within the UNESCO Committee are: Education for all: Strengthening rural education; promoting women in science and protecting world heritage sites against new and emerging threats. Spain is ready to cooperate with other countries in order to reach an agreement aimed at promoting peace through cooperation in the fields of education, science and culture, in the spirit of that committee.

- **Education for All: Strengthening Rural Education**

Spain believes that the lack of education in rural regions is the cause and at the same time the consequence of rural poverty. In order to go further than the collaboration between the FAO and UNESCO, our delegation highly recommends a joint effort between our committee and rural organisations such as companies or NGOs. It is a fact that many parents in the poorest areas expect their children to contribute to the household income and they believe that education would be useless for them. On the contrary, providing rural education would help to reduce poverty in such regions by giving the keys of self-management to the next generation. Spain attaches great importance to that kind of collaboration, between UNESCO and other UN agencies on one hand and on the other hand with rural and urban organisations. The Spanish delegation reaffirms its point of view regarding gender equality; once more, girls are less likely to attend school. Our delegation urges other members of that committee to take some solid decisions about this widening gap between girls and boys and equality of opportunities. Spain believes that strengthening rural education by giving access to school to more children would have no effect without improving infrastructure, school's equipment and the training of teachers. That's why we suggest implementing in one place at a time real practical support from developed countries to developing countries. It will consist of sending some teachers to poorer countries to help their colleagues for a set time period. It is important that the foreign teachers are made aware of the culture of the country and must not involve themselves in school programs, only advise native teachers about teaching methods.. Learning by doing is the key for teachers.

- **Promoting Women in Science**

There is no denying that there is a scarcity of women within science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), whether it be in educational or job opportunities. Spain believes that in the context of globalization, economic and social upheaval in some regions of the world and climate change, giving the opportunity to girls and women to have access to STEM fields would increase scientific research in crucial sectors. The delegation from Spain believes that this topic raises two fundamental issues: gender equality and sustainable development. Spain remains convinced that these issues are linked. According to the International Conference on Population and Development, the scarcity of educated women, and in particular in STEM fields, hampers economic and political development. Spain attaches great importance to the Programme of Action and reaffirms the emergency to achieve the targets of this program, which ended in 2014. In order to achieve success in that direction, our delegation urges other members to recall one of the two main goals of our committee: reduce gender discrimination. It is true that our micro-level partnerships works relatively efficiently but Spain highly recommends macro-level collaborations to have more impact in developing countries. A close collaboration with NGOs or Member States with a successful woman in STEM fields would be a good example for all girls and women who are searching for their way in life. The delegation of Spain is convinced above all that a kind of "HeforShe" campaign specialized in promoting women in science would be the best solution to improve the situation. Choosing a standard-bearer known throughout the whole world for her works in STEM fields, raising the awareness of men about women's contribution in these sectors, encouraging women to start a career in these fields, would be more efficient since the motivation would come from themselves. It would take time, like all other measures, but would decrease gender-based discrimination and gender stereotyping.

- Protecting World Heritage Sites against New and Emerging Threats

It is Spain's view that the protection of world heritage sites is inextricably linked to the most challenging hazards for humanity. This matter is all the more crucial in that not only cultural heritage but also sources of revenue, resources and employment are at stake. Natural disasters, such as climate change and armed conflicts are only foreseeable to a certain extent. That's why, for the moment, we are only able to learn from the past and implement our best practices to protect our heritage. The Spanish delegation reaffirms its commitment to world and cultural heritage and calls on other Member States to take the measures which have to be taken. Because world heritage is one of the best ways of promoting our values and our history, Spain has defended it for a long time. In the face of emerging threats, now is the time for committed action. In the case of armed conflicts, the Spanish delegation recommends a collaboration with a UN committee which is able to resolve armed conflicts. The Security Council has already adopted a resolution (resolution 2199), which condemned the cultural destruction in Iraq and Syria. After the words, we have to act. We believe that a collaboration between UNESCO and the department of peace and security would help to reduce threats by allocating more resources (awareness campaign, money for preservation) although the best way to reduce this threat remains containing the advance of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant. Regarding natural threats (non man-made threats) and dangers caused by climate change (human made threats), a partnership with United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and UNESCO would be a solid beginning of collaboration between three entities from the department of development. It would identify potential threats and how many times they occur, developing reflex actions to limit the damage, raising the awareness of people about the greatness of our heritage.