***Delegation from Represented by***

**South Korea John Abbott College**

**United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization**

The Republic of Korea takes the advancement of education and the preservation of culture to heart. The motto of South Korea: "Hongik Ingan" promotes these very ideals to be discussed at the UNESCO conference; "Devotion to the overall benefit of humankind". (NCES, 2015) With a population of roughly over 50 million people, (WHO,2015) South Korea has very successfully and admirably stepped out of the shadows of its time under Japanese control many decades ago and has since then advanced to become a powerful nation. Seoul; the Capital of South Korea and its largest city, is one of the top global cities in the world. It has become a heavily urbanized country with the grand majority of its inhabitants living urbanized lifestyles in the city.

Just decades ago, South Korea was under the rule of Japan (which ended in WWII) which oppressed the development of South Koreans, with education being primarily available only to the Japanese occupying the Republic of Korea. When Japan's occupation was over, it left the country in shambles, with over 78% of the population being illiterate. After being liberated from the Japanese control, the country set to work to create a stronger educational system, but even as late as 1970 the income per capita was at a mere 200$. (NCEE, 2016) With remarkable speed and determination, South Korea now holds one the most technologically advanced and educated populations in the world. It was not only through the government's tactics for re-growth but the idea of equal higher education for all citizens; that being the central idea to the education system. (NCES, 2015) The speedy growth of the nation is also due to the strong determination of the population to advance as a whole through these new resources available to them.

South Korea can be seen very much as a model nation to others by demonstrating the importance and effectiveness of an equally advanced education on its nation. There are many nations currently members of the United Nations that are still suffering with higher illiteracy rates and inaccessibility of proper education. As of 2013 there are more than 124 million children who cannot attend schooling and over 100 million children and adolescents still illiterate. (Ton That et al, 2016) This can be greatly changed through reforms in the public education sectors of government in these states. With more care and funding put into their education systems, not only can basic education be available to all, but like South Korea strive to have higher education equally available to all the population. The delegation of South Korea is also a strong supporter of the Incheon Declaration of Education 2030, and believes a resolution should be passed to allow nations currently with stronger economic standing and developed educational systems to contribute to a fund that can help other nations in need, and help provide a basic level of education to all.

Many beautiful and artistic buildings and monuments, which serve as testaments to the rich history of the nation, grace the landscape of South Korea. There are 12 currently recognized World Heritage sites in South Korea.**4** These sites, as well as other world heritage sites around the world, serve as part of history of their respective nations and the world. It also serves to recognize the remarkable achievements of humans over the centuries. As a result, any act to desecrate or tarnish the reputation and condition of these places should be considered a serious offense. Many of these locations around the world are facing these threats from not only natural causes but from effects of wars and global warming. In their acts of terror ISIS and ISIL have already destroyed many mosques, shrines and other ancient sites; a notable one being the Temple of Bel in Palmyra that was destroyed by ISIL. The delegation of South Korea believes that protection of these sites should be more of a priority, and that a resolution should be proposed to enforce consequences on those who harm these heritage sites.

To conclude the delegation of the South Korea strongly supports the need for increasing the accessibility of education to all and to better the quality of education systems in other member states. We also recognize the rising concern to preserve the culture and history of all nations through the increased preservation and protection of World Heritage sites. The Republic of Korea is a firm believer in UNESCO and what it stands for: the preservation of culture and the advancement of education and technology. It stands by what this nation stands for “Assist all people in perfecting their individual character... and promoting the prosperity of Humankind". (NCEE,2016)

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