

believe that the true timeliness of this Recommendation lies in its power to open up scientific thought and evidence-based decision-making, in times where the spread of misinformation is unprecedented, posing a threat to our democratic core values.

Among key developments, Estonia is particularly glad to note its accession to the Global Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education. This is a milestone both in practical terms, as well as for contributing to SDGs, mutual understanding, and increased international exchange. We hope that other countries will follow, and that the Convention will enter into force soon.

It is essential to engage youth in the discussions related to global challenges and UNESCO's mandate. Estonia hopes that the 12th UNESCO Youth Forum, held online during this General Conference, provides future change makers with the platform to contribute to the global dialogue on the effects of COVID-19 and building back better after the pandemic.

Distinguished delegates,

UNESCO has made great efforts to make the role of culture in sustainable development more visible. In the face of the pandemic, we appreciate the work done by the Culture Sector to

Cultural Policies and Sustainable Development

Conference MondiaCult to be held in Mexico City next year. Estonia is ready to work with UNESCO and other UN agencies to protect multilingualism and indigenous languages in particular through contributing to the International Decade of Indigenous Languages (2022-2032).

The gripping reality of armed conflicts and ongoing crises in the world challenge UNESCO's ability to respond to destruction of cultural heritage, including organized looting and illicit trafficking. Estonia appreciates the work done by the Heritage Emergency Fund to respond to a wide range of emergencies affecting heritage and we are proud to be one of its donors.

Estonia recognizes international exchange.

and will host the Global Conference for Media Freedom that will take place in Tallinn from February 9 to 10 next year.

Estonia wishes every success to Ms Audrey Azoulay for her second term as the Director General. As the next mid-term strategy is about to be adopted, UNESCO should continue its active engagement with the broader UN reform effort. We are confident that commitment to Strategic Transformation will
mandate.

Thank you!