

National Statement of Romania

Address by H.E. Mr. Daniel-Ovidiu DAVID, Minister of Education and Research of Romania, at the 43rd Session of the UNESCO General Conference

1 November 2025

Mr President of the General Conference,

Madam Chairperson of the Executive Board,

Madam Director-General,

Excellencies,

Distinguished Delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am honored to address you today, on behalf of Romania, at the UNESCO General Conference, in the extraordinary city of Samarkand – Crossroad of Cultures – and I would like, from the outset, to congratulate the President and the Government of the Republic of Uzbekistan for all their efforts in organizing this session and giving us the opportunity to discover a UNESCO World Heritage treasure.

This year, we mark the 80th anniversary of UNESCO's founding. Next year, Romania will celebrate 70 years since joining the Organization. These milestones invite us both to honour our shared achievements in advancing peace and human development, and to reflect on how we can further strengthen UNESCO's role at a time of profound global change.

We find ourselves in a challenging situation. The war waged by the Russian Federation in Ukraine, which we strongly condemn, has global consequences. The senseless loss of human lives, the level of destruction of educational, scientific, and civil infrastructure and cultural heritage, and the impact on the environment in conflict-affected countries in the world show us that the main objective, that of planting peace in people's minds, is far from being achieved.

Confronted with this situation, we believe that the only credible response is to reinforce our collective commitment to peace, to fundamental rights and freedoms, and to sustainable development — as well as to provide the necessary resources to advance these goals.

Romania remains deeply committed to UNESCO's mission across all its fields — education, science, culture and communication.

I want to express our gratitude to Member States for entrusting Romania with the Presidency of the 42nd Session of the General Conference. This has been a milestone in our engagement with UNESCO and a step forward in advancing women's leadership within the Organization. During her mandate, Ambassador Simona-Mirela Miculescu worked tirelessly to enhance UNESCO's role globally and mobilized the international community to initiate the most extensive digital transformation programme in the Organization's history, aimed at making UNESCO's archives universally accessible. We are deeply proud of her accomplishments. We also congratulate the new President of the General Conference and wish him a successful mandate.

We are ready to contribute actively and constructively to our shared priorities and, to this end, we ask for your precious support for Romania's candidacy to the Executive Board at the elections on 7 November.

I wish to convey Romania's sincere appreciation to Director-General Audrey Azoulay for her exemplary leadership over the past two terms, during times of significant challenge for the international community.

Furthermore, Romania is pleased to support the nomination of Professor Khaled El-Enany of Egypt for the position of Director-General. The appointment of the first Director-General from the Arab Group would represent an important and timely step for the Organization. We look forward to cooperating closely with him, confident that UNESCO's priorities will be advanced with vision and determination.

Education remains at the heart of UNESCO's mandate and is a key driver for achieving the 2030 Agenda. Romania values the work of the SDG4 High-Level Steering Committee in mobilizing political will and resources to ensure equitable access to quality education for all learners.

As modern societies thrive as knowledge-based entities—where knowledge is generated through research and disseminated via education and culture—we must address key vulnerabilities to safeguard this foundation. Functional illiteracy, a potential threat to our civilization, fosters pseudoscience and conspiracy theories, undermining societal progress. Romania advocates for ongoing monitoring and targeted interventions in educational processes to combat this issue. Moreover, the connectivity and information accessibility enabled by the internet and social media create opportunities for both science and pseudoscience. We emphasize the need to explicitly promote science while countering pseudoscience, not only in formal education but also in nonformal and informal settings, including digital platforms.

The central role of teachers has been reaffirmed this year, including through the UNESCO World Summit on Teachers in Santiago, and the adoption of the Santiago Consensus. Romania is committed to implementing its priority actions, as well as the recommendations of the UN Secretary-General's High-Level Panel on the Teaching Profession.

In the field of culture, we continue to preserve and promote our heritage, including sites inscribed on the World Heritage List. In 2024, two new sites of outstanding value were added: the “Calea Eroilor” Monumental Ensemble in Târgu-Jiu, created by Constantin Brâncuși, and the serial property “Frontiers of the Roman Empire – Dacia”. Romania also strongly supports the ongoing efforts to secure a dedicated Sustainable Development Goal for culture in the post-2030 global development framework.

We salute the latest addition of the city of Bistrița to the UNESCO creative cities network, in the category of architecture.

Romania remains actively involved in UNESCO's statutory bodies and programmes, and we look forward to further strengthening our participation, including through our candidature to the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage.

On the scientific dimension, we welcome the proposed Recommendation on the Ethics of Neurotechnologies and underline Romania's active contribution to its development. Human emancipation demands a reconceptualization of social institutions that empowers individuals as co-creators of decisions affecting their lives. In science and education, this includes fostering citizen science as a promising framework—ensuring we elevate citizens to the standards of scientific rigor rather than diluting science for accessibility.

Romania is strongly engaged in the UNESCO Global Geoparks Network through two recognized geoparks — Hațeg Country and Buzău Land — as well as through multiple new geopark initiatives currently in progress.

We also attach particular importance to meaningful youth participation and welcome the involvement of the Romanian youth delegate at the recent Youth Forum.

Our cross-cutting priorities — Gender Equality, Africa, and SIDS — remain essential.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Romania will continue to act with responsibility, solidarity, and determination, working alongside all Member States to advance UNESCO's mission. We highly value the role of National Commissions in building capacities and supporting action at local level, and we stand ready to strengthen cooperation among them.

Together, we can make tangible progress toward a future defined by peace, dignity, and sustainable development. Thank you!