10.1 **Mr Bold (Mongolia):**

Thank you, Mr Moderator. Your Excellencies, distinguished delegates, as the 2015 target date for achieving the Millennium Development Goals approaches, there are a growing number of processes, preparatory activities and debates on what the post-2015 agenda will look like. A new post-2015 era demands a new vision and responsive framework. UNESCO is contributing to framing the post-2015 development agenda in many ways. In this respect, I wish to underline that today’s Leaders’ Forum under the theme “UNESCO mobilizing for and contributing to the post-2015 agenda through education, the sciences, culture and communication and information” is indeed another opportunity to formulate innovative messages and guidance to contribute to the post-2015 development agenda within the UNESCO mandate. The Government of Mongolia strongly believes that literacy is a fundamental right and essential monitor for human development. Just a moment ago, we attended the special lunch session on this issue, which was addressed by many participants. The battle of literacy is not over and in a digital world it is a very challenging and very exciting issue we have to deal with.

10.2 As the initiator of the United Nations Literacy Decade, Mongolia has been active in supporting UNESCO in its role as coordinating agency of the Decade throughout. The United Nations Literacy Decade was marked by significant progress. We witnessed a rise in the global adult literacy rate and a fall in the numbers of the illiterate population worldwide. However, as made clear in the final evaluation of the implementation of the international plan of action of the United Nations Literacy Decade, we are not there yet. Millions of primary school age children are out of school today. Millions of children are in school but are failing to learn the basics. Millions of women and men with poor literacy skills face problems in their lives. Much stronger political commitment and collective effort are needed to scale up literacy, improve the quality of education for children and adolescents and provide lifelong learning opportunities especially for girls, women and those belonging to marginalized groups.

10.3 Taking this opportunity, I am pleased to inform you that a few days ago, on 31 October, the Third Committee of the 68th session of the United Nations General Assembly unanimously approved the resolution entitled “Literacy for Life: Shaping Future Agendas”. Initiated by Mongolia and co-sponsored by 85 United Nations Member States. The resolution recognized the importance of continuing the implementation of measures to eliminate illiteracy worldwide. It also encourages Member States to further utilize innovative information and communication technology and solutions to address the needs of marginalized groups, including girls and persons with disabilities among others. We believe that UNESCO should continue to play its catalytic and coordinating role at a global level to advance the literacy agenda to and beyond 2015 and therefore support the proposal to create a global multi-stakeholder partnership in support of national efforts to accelerate progress towards attainment of the unfinished agenda.

10.4 And briefly, the second issue we wished to draw your attention to is related to education for democracy. As you all know, Mongolia has held the Presidency of the Community of Democracies for the past two years. During our term, we have identified education for democracy as our primary focus. We have led a number of initiatives to advance thinking on education for democracy, including expert seminars and ministerial meetings and the sponsorship and ultimate passing of a United Nations General Assembly resolution on education for democracy, which was adopted unanimously. In addition to these high-level activities, we have strived to make a contribution to the practical work of implementing education for democracy and we have identified curriculum development as an area where there is a need and an opportunity to make such a contribution.

10.5 Just to clarify this, there are many democracy-related curricula in textbooks already. However, they tend to focus heavily on education about democracy, rather than education for democracy, because most schools around the world remain quite traditional in their approach. Students have a limited opportunity to learn to think and act democratically. They are socialized to behave passively and compassionately. How, then, do we expect them to engage in public life as democratic citizens after graduation? To encourage active democratic citizenship and cultivate the kind of learning and development which leads to it, it is necessary to look at a deeper and more experiential kind of learning. We encourage student-centred education reforms that are inherently democratic in their approach to pedagogy, assessment and other aspects of the educational experience. In short, the framework development assistance of Canadian colleagues reflects democratic values and principles at every opportunity and is compatible with existing educational reform agendas worldwide. It provides guidance on how to educate for democracy, not just what to teach. In spite of its limited distribution, the framework has received very positive feedback. Based on this feedback, we think the framework has the potential to make an excellent contribution to advancing education for democracy in many countries, if it can be taken into this broader audience. And the support and cooperation of UNESCO and fellow members would be invaluable with regard to increasing access to the document and thereby unlocking its potential for further impact in education systems around the world. Thank you very much, Mr Moderator.