



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization

Organisation  
des Nations Unies  
pour l'éducation,  
la science et la culture

Organización  
de las Naciones Unidas  
para la Educación,  
la Ciencia y la Cultura

Организация  
Объединенных Наций по  
вопросам образования,  
науки и культуры

منظمة الأمم المتحدة  
للتربية والعلم والثقافة

联合国教育、  
科学及文化组织

## General Conference

40th Session, Paris, 2019

# 40 C

40 C/64

3 September 2019

Original: English

Item 5.21 of the provisional agenda

### PROCLAMATION OF A WORLD ENGINEERING DAY FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

#### OUTLINE

**Background:** This item has been included in the provisional agenda of the 40th session of the General Conference following the decision of the Executive Board at its 206th session (206 EX/Decision 36).

**Purpose:** It presents the World Engineering Day for Sustainable Development draft resolution which advocates for an annual celebration, every 4 March, to highlight the achievements of engineers and engineering in our modern world and improve public understanding of how engineering and technology is central to modern life and sustainable development with the view to its adoption by the General Conference, following the endorsement by the Executive Board at its 206th session.

**Decision required:** paragraph 9.



Job: 201911176

## Background

1. Engineering is critical for sustainable development and economic advancement. Engineering endeavours the modern economy. Every one of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) can be advanced through engineering.
2. A World Engineering Day will highlight that engineers are needed more than ever before to address the pressing needs of clean water and sanitation, natural disaster resilience, grow more food, and protect our oceans and our earth resources. Therefore, this Day will constitute an ideal opportunity to present the recent achievements of engineers and engineering and how engineering and technology are central to modern life and sustainable development.
3. A World Engineering Day will also be an opportunity to demonstrate the importance of engineering through the millennia. The Acropolis and the Parthenon in Greece, the Roman aqueducts and the Colosseum, the pyramids in Egypt, the Great Wall of China, and the cities and pyramids of the Mayan, Inca and Aztec Empires, are all testaments of the ingenuity of the engineers of ancient times and are recognized by UNESCO as world heritage.
4. A World Engineering Day will provide opportunity for dialogue between engineers and decision-makers, industry leaders, scientists, non-governmental organizations and the public at large to address the world's most pressing issues using engineering.
5. A World Engineering Day will provide UNESCO with an important opportunity to fulfil its mission of promoting international cooperation for addressing the key area of modern science as it relates to engineering for sustainable development.
6. A World Engineering Day will support Member States in meeting their obligations vis-a-vis the Paris Agreement on climate change as well as in the overall context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
7. During the 206th session of the Executive Board, the Programme and External Relations Commission (PX) examined document 206 EX/36, submitted by China, Dominican Republic, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Gambia, Kenya, Liberia, Madagascar, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Palestine, Senegal, Tunisia, Turkey, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, and Zimbabwe.
8. It is in this context that, after having examined document 206 EX/36 (Annex I), the Executive Board decided to endorse the proposal and to include this item in the agenda of the 40th session of the General Conference, and recommended that the General Conference adopt a resolution to proclaim 4 March of each year as the World Engineering Day for Sustainable Development (Annex II).
9. In light of the above, the General Conference may wish to adopt a resolution along the following lines:

*The General Conference,*

*Having examined* document 40 C/64,

*Considering* that greater global awareness and understanding of the role of engineering in modern life is essential to mitigate the impact of climate change and advance sustainable development, especially in Africa and the small island developing states (SIDS),

*Stressing* that engineering is essential for economic advancement and for the implementation of new technologies and the application of science, including for basic needs of food, health, housing, roads and transport, water, energy and management of the planet's resources,

*Noting* the broad and significant impact of recent initiatives of UNESCO's programmes in the basic and engineering sciences and the enthusiastic commitment of the international engineering community to continue to work with UNESCO on internationally coordinated advocacy activities,

*Recognizing* that it is vital that the achievements of earlier UNESCO initiatives in science and education are effectively followed up and strengthened,

*Also recognizing* the commitment of UNESCO and its Member States to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,

*Further recognizing* the need to address gender segregation in engineering by showcasing important engineering role models and developing programmes to encourage more girls to consider engineering as a career,

*Recognizing* that engineering has been changing the world for millennia and that the new rapidly emerging technologies are an opportunity for positive transformation that leaves no one behind,

*Acknowledging* the driving role of the World Federation of Engineering Organizations (WFEO) together with the Federation of African Engineering Organizations (FAEO), Federation of Engineering Institutions of Asia and the Pacific (FEIAP), Pan-American Federation of Engineering Societies (UPADI), European Federation of National Engineering Associations (FEANI), International Federation of Engineering Education Societies (IFEES), and more than 75 other institutions including women-in-engineering networks and engineering academies, in the conception of a world engineering day for sustainable development, as well as in the organization and mobilization of partners for celebrations and events annually around this day,

1. *Welcomes* and *endorses* the proposal of the Executive Board to proclaim a world engineering day for sustainable development;
2. *Proclaims* 4 March of every year World Engineering Day for Sustainable Development;
3. *Invites* Member States to provide extrabudgetary funds to enable the Director-General to ensure the participation of UNESCO in the promotion and celebration of World Engineering Day for Sustainable Development.