

## National Statement of Commitment

Honorable Global Leaders,

The Government of Albania and the Ministry of Education and Sports in Albania, come forward to represent and confirm their commitment to advance and transform education to better serve to our children, young people and generations to come.

We fully recognize the challenges faced by our education system. These challenges which call for more attention as also heightened during the National Consultations held in Albania, are the ones focusing around rapid technological change and technology development in education, skillset building and labor market global trends to be reflected in the education curricula, quality assurance and innovation in education, quality of teaching and continuous training, ensuring students' opportunities for developing talents and active participation in learning, education practices and building citizenship skillset.

We have and will further mobilize resources to ensure substantial and necessary change in support of inclusive, equitable, safe and healthy schools; lifelong learning and life skills, work and sustainable development; teachers, teaching and the teaching profession; digitalization and digital transformation in schools; and level up financing of education to ensure inclusive schools promote democratic culture.

**WE COMMIT TO INVEST WITH PRIORITY AND BUILD-UP EDUCATION by prioritizing interventions as following:**

### *Recovery from Covid-19 disruption:*

Creating a school environment that supports and improves **students' identity, mental and physical well-being** through increasing the numbers of professionals in the psycho-social education system, providing capacity building to these professionals, defining the protocols and regulations for the professionals of the psycho-social services in schools, and providing spaces in schools to offer psycho-social support to children and adolescents. Committing to prioritize and strengthen the primary education system and creating models to ensure reduction of dropout rates from the secondary education system towards a more sustainable and developed education system.

Dismantling social and geographic obstacles to increasing **access to education for all** children and young people, with giving a special emphasis to the vulnerable groups through securing free school transportation for students and teachers located in distant areas, and scholarships and/ or financial quotes for students with special needs and those from vulnerable groups with a focus on fostering the conditions for educational opportunities.

Leveraging **development of innovation** in education, by adapting technology and digital tools to enhance teaching and learning in schools, investing in distant/ blending learning to ensure education and learning for all, designing and developing online platforms in support of student-centered quality education and lifelong learning, allowing for local innovation and enhanced equity. Continue investing in digital services in the education system, including registration of students, learning achievements and digitalization of schools documents. Continue promoting the involvement of teachers in professional networks that promote innovation and critical thinking.

**Structuring and strengthening** the role of "Students Government, Students Parliament and School Boards" for accountability in the system, creating the space to amplify student voice and have a meaningful role in representing needs, advocating and lobbying for improved educational practices and setting standards in support of student's achievement. Creating spaces and opportunities (ex.

after school courses, different programs etc.) for the promotion of talents and gifts of every child in the education system.

Continue **enhancing and consolidating teachers' capacities** and incentives to be contemporary and efficient in their educational practices, and with adequate use of digital technology to maximize learning and their continuous professional development, through capacity building, training, and exchange programs. Commit to undertake initiatives that enable professional development of teachers in the pre service stage of studies. Closely collaborating with academia to review study programs in the pedagogy/ teaching profiles to enhance capacities of ICT in teaching and learning.

Emphasizing importance of **arts and sport activities** within the school setting and developing arts and sport programs as an impact factor for students wellbeing and overall quality of life. Creating this space as a mean to promote active citizenship values and promoting them through sport classes, focusing on gymnastic, athletics, and tennis.

### ***Transforming education based on national education targets and benchmarks:***

**Enhancing equity** through addressing and removing barriers within schools and classrooms, combating them through programs for improving students-teachers-parents' relationships, and creating and inclusive culture for every child.

Developing **inclusive environments** that include accessible physical infrastructure for all, child friendly and safe spaces, support teachers' continuous training, arts and sports, and enhance facilities to reflect inclusion. Investing in the creation and promotion of resource centers and resource classrooms as models that support inclusion in education and lifelong learning. Assuring quality education for migrant/ returnees' children, children refugees from conflict zones and children from different national minorities' communities.

Designing an **inclusive curriculum** that supports education of less favorable groups and increases levels of their engagement, participation, and motivation, offering opportunities for higher levels of attainment for those left behind. Developing and implementing **curriculum and free learning resources**, for all primary education students, and for secondary and tertiary education students coming from vulnerable conditions.

**Modernizing the education system** by updating the curriculum and structure to ensure that the learning is reflective of careers real world skills and to prepare students for the modern workforce. **Crafting a school curriculum** focusing on exploring the modern labor market and applicable employment opportunities, green agenda and environmental protection, start-ups and entrepreneurship, technology and digital learning, bringing professions closer to school students. Continue investing in higher quality and contemporary textbooks that create opportunities to learn in flexible ways.

Prioritizing **building school physical infrastructure**, reducing class-size, university campus, reconstruct/ build new dormitories, scientific research laboratories, sport spaces, other recreational areas, teachers teaching equipment, to enable a practical, contemporary, attractive and quality learning environment.

Promoting the use of national ICT platforms and create sustainable digital resources that empower competencies, creative thinking of students and teachers in the use of ICT in education, including broadband connection coverage and the right equipment for all students to facilitate education and learning.

### *Ensuring sustainable public financing:*

**Enhancing cooperation** with civil society organizations, businesses, donor community and other stakeholders in the educational area, for the implementation of a broader scope activities within schools, and further ensure cross sectorial collaboration to facilitate the transition to the labor market. Continue investing in engaging and cooperation with these stakeholders for setting up a joint vision, objectives and indicators in alignment with international standards which can be comparable and evaluate the performance of the education system and adaption with the demands of the labor market.

**Advance recognition of Albanian education** by aligning education standards with European Union standards, internationalizing tertiary education in Albania, recognizing Albanian diploma at EU level, and creating more opportunities of twinning of education programs to enable furthering exchange of experiences, practices and education opportunities.

Developing and implementing **a monitoring mechanisms** for regular reviewing and updating of education benchmarks and targets, including redesigning policies and practices to improve education outcomes. Promoting the achievements of students and education institutions through a standardized monitoring system while continue supporting schools facing challenges to meet standards.

**Achieving funding adequacy** in the education system through a mix of program driver modifications and structural funding reforms, that enable contemporary learning, students' wellbeing, enhance equity and strengthen schools and the system.

Supporting **financial autonomy of schools** and their mobilization for other financial sources to create space and increase activities within the school setting.