



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

# 9<sup>th</sup> World Congress of WFUCA

Beijing, China, 22 July 2015

Address by

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President of the General Conference

Vice-Minister of Education

Chairperson of the National Commission for UNESCO  
of the People's Republic of China

Distinguished guests, dear friends,  
Dear teachers and students,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

It is my pleasure to meet you here in Beijing to celebrate the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of UNESCO at the opening ceremony of the 9<sup>th</sup> World Congress of WFUCA.

70 years ago, to recover from the sufferings brought by the two World Wars in the same century, and to establish a new international community of peaceful co-existence, our wise ancestors have realized that “since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed”. It is exactly in that context that UNESCO was born with the mandate of building peace in the minds of men and women.

In the past 70 years, UNESCO have endeavored to eliminate misunderstanding, prejudice and hatred, to enhance mutual trust and to spread the seeds of peace, through its work in the fields of education, science, culture and information dissemination. UNESCO has made unremitting efforts especially in rebuilding schools, literacy education, protection of world heritages, protection of cultural diversity, promotion of cultural dialogue and sustainable development.

In the past 15 years, with UNESCO as the leading and coordinating agency of Education for All, the dropout rate of youth declined by 50% across the globe, with 34 million more children go to school.

The 2015 World Education Forum, which was held in Incheon in May, has brought out the educational development objectives for the next 15 years. The international society is from now on mobilized to achieve “Equitable and inclusive quality education and lifelong learning for all by 2030”.

UNESCO promotes and supports international cooperation in both natural and human sciences for sustainable development, bearing in mind that a sustainable future cannot be achieved only by technological solutions, political regulation or financial instruments alone. Though a range of flagship programmes and cooperation mechanisms such as IOC (Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission), MAB (man and biosphere programme), MOST (Management for Social Transformation Programme), UNESCO explores ways for the humankind to live together in our common planet.

UNESCO always upholds the idea that culture is the key for sustainable development. Today, UNESCO has established seven Conventions on the subject of protection of cultural property in armed conflict, protection of the world cultural and natural heritage, safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage as well as underwater cultural heritages etc. UNESCO has worked untiringly to promote mutual respect, understanding and dialogue among civilizations.

Today, we gather here to celebrate the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of UNESCO. Cheered by the remarkable accomplishments of UNESCO, we should not forget that in the inter-connected world, we have to face with common challenges including environmental deterioration, inequality, extremism, terrorism, separatism, cultural misunderstanding etc, caused by industrialization and modernization which brings us with not only growth. Therefore, our task ahead, is to consolidate peace and to build a community of common destiny for all mankind.

I’m glad to see that against this context, the IX World Congress of WFUCA is convened “for a peaceful world, for a better future”. Over 120 representatives of UNESCO clubs across the globe will discuss the future role and way of civil society in collaboration of UNESCO for the common cause. This event is of great significance.

UNESCO must continue to serve as the “Soul of UN” and the “Laboratory of Ideas”, which could not be accomplished without Member States’ joint efforts, nor can it be accomplished without the contribution from civil society. I am confident that under the stewardship of UNESCO, our clubs and associations will work hand in hand to go further for the long-lasting peace and common welfare of all peoples in the world.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Chinese government attaches great importance to the cooperation with UNESCO. In March, 2014, Chinese President Xi Jinping paid a historic visit to UNESCO, and delivered an important speech regarding cultural

exchanges with a new perspective. Since this visit, the cooperation between China and UNESCO has come into the best era in history. In the last month, when meeting with Director General Madam Irina Bokova, Premier Mr. Li Keqiang reaffirmed Chinese government's commitment to cooperate with UNESCO. China, as the founding nation of UNESCO, will make her due contributions to building the community of common destiny for all humankind.

Lastly, as the President of General Conference of UNESCO, and on behalf of the Chinese National Commission for UNESCO and Ministry of Education, I wish every success to the World Congress and wish you a very pleasant stay in Beijing.

Thank you.

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