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UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL,
SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION

Address by
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of the United Nations Educational,
Scientific and Cultural Organization
(UNESCO)

on the occasion of his visit to the Guidance, Counselling and
Youth Development Centre for Africa

Lilongwe, Malawi, 6 September 2002

Your Excellency, Minister of Education, Science and Technology of Malawi,
Your Excellency, Minister of Education of Uganda,
UNDP Resident Coordinator,
Director of the Guidance, Counselling and Youth Development Centre for
Africa,
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,
Boys and Girls,

I am very pleased to be here this morning and to have had this opportunity to visit the Guidance, Counselling and Youth Development Centre for Africa. I would like, first of all, to thank the Minister of Education of Uganda, Dr Edward Khiddu Makubuya, for his kind remarks. In addition, I would like to thank the boys and girls for their performances of dance and music, which were very enjoyable.

While a good deal remains to be done at the Centre, I have been impressed by what I have seen and I am gratified that the Centre has reached this point in its development. Perhaps most of all, I have been impressed by the enthusiasm which the Centre attracts among those involved with it. The Centre has reached its present stage of development thanks to the strong support of the Government of Malawi and of various bilateral and multilateral partners. Their generous contributions will be crucial for the generation and implementation of programmes and courses. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the governments of Finland, Japan, Denmark, the United States and Italy; the Rockefeller Foundation; and UNICEF, UNDP, UNFPA and FAWE. It is crucial that such support can be relied upon in the future so that the Centre can be helped to perform its functions for the benefit of all African countries.

In order to ensure a multiplier effect in the Member States, the Centre's programme will focus on the training of trainers and extension workers. A component on preventive education against the spread of HIV/AIDS will be included. It is my hope that countries from all parts of Africa will utilize the Centre and benefit from the programmes it offers.

I have just attended the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, South Africa. The key word on everyone's lips is "sustainability" and this applies to such centres as this. The viability of the Centre will, I believe, ultimately depend on the following four factors.

First, UNESCO will continue to play a catalytic role in the development of the Centre and in the implementation of its programmes. In this regard, UNESCO will cooperate closely with other UN Agencies.

Second, all African countries involved in the programme activities should support the Centre. I thank the Governments of Malawi, Nigeria and Zimbabwe for their financial contributions so far, and I urge all other Member States to send their support. The UNESCO Harare Cluster Office will coordinate these efforts. It is important, therefore, that the Director of our Harare Office as well as the UNDP Resident Coordinator are allowed to attend the meetings of the Governing Board of the Centre as Observers.

Third, we need to continue to mobilize extrabudgetary funds from bilateral and multilateral donors.

Lastly, we need to develop the capacity of the Centre to become genuinely income-generating not only through the performance of its core functions, especially the training of trainers, but also, for example, by serving as a venue for meetings and conferences. I would recommend that the opportunities for mobilizing income in this way and in other ways are explored and developed in the period ahead.

I shall close these brief remarks by reiterating how pleased I am to see this important initiative with my own eyes. The Minister of Education of Uganda talked about the possibility of vacating his position as Chairman of the Board after MINEDAF VIII. I urge him to stay with us until the construction work is fully completed. I thank Dr Munodawafa for his warm welcome. I can assure you all of UNESCO's interest in the Centre and its programmes of study and training. I wish you every success in fulfilling the aims and objectives of the Centre.

Thank you.