



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
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منظمة الأمم المتحدة
للتربية والعلم والثقافة

联合国教育、
科学及文化组织

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Intervention

by

H.E. Dr Hao Ping
President of the General Conference
Vice-Minister of Education
of the People's Republic of China

Chairperson of the Executive Board,
Madame Director-General of UNESCO,
Excellences,
Ladies and gentlemen,

Today, I am pleased to join our autumn gathering under the leadership of our Chairperson and Dr Mohamed Amr.

I wish also to extend my congratulations and appreciation to the Director General for her extensive and inspiring report.

Since the last session of the Board, which was followed in July with the information meeting, I have had the opportunity to participate in a number of other important global actions.

These include: 1) the Global Education First Initiative High-Level event on "Quality Education for the World We Want", 2) the celebration of the 20th anniversary of the Slave Route Project, and others.

In each case, I wish to express my thanks to the hosting Member States for their warm hospitality and their continued commitment and support to the work of UNESCO.

Mr. Chairperson, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am pleased to see that this session of Executive Board Meeting will witness the official launch of the celebration of the 70th Anniversary of the Organization.

This offers us an excellent opportunity to review achievements and look to the future.

When we look back the history of UNESCO, I believe we can take pride that our predecessors have always been mindful of the fundamental spirit of the Organization, that is: wars begin from the mind of people.

To maintain the sustainable peace of the world, we must remain relentless in seeking to “build the peace in the minds of men and women”.

This is our common value, which is engraved not only on the walls in the garden of this house, but also and more important, in our hearts.

In pursuing this objective, UNESCO has helped to reconcile peoples who were once war enemies, it has significantly helped the independence movement of developing countries, it has facilitated countless networks across the world for exchange, cooperation and action, covering all fields of intellectual life.

These seven decades witnessed numerous innovative concepts and ideas, nurtured and invented by UNESCO, which has helped to drive global intellectual developments.

Today, in the 21st century, UNESCO has entered this new era, putting forward sharply relevant concepts, such as “Education for all”, “world heritage”, “cultural diversity”, “new humanism ” as well as its leading ideas and flagship projects, among which we note “Africa Priority, and Gender Equity”, “Global Education First Initiative”, “culture for sustainable development”, “creative cities networks”

As in the past, UNESCO is leading from the front action today, to shape a better future for all, a more peaceful, just and sustainable 21st century.

This role has been and it remains irreplaceable.

These are the unique strengths of UNESCO -- which earned the Organization international respect; which has established its leadership position in education, culture, sciences, communication and information, which has made it worthy of its reputation as “world’s think-tank”.

Today, UNESCO is increasingly known and understood by more and more people, especially young women and men – we see this in their enthusiasm to take part in UNESCO activities, to work as interns.

In addition, more and more governments consider the organization as an essential platform for learning, exchanges and dialogues, as we see the number of head of states or government visiting UNESCO each year keeps increasing.

These are signs of confidence and trust – we must build on them to build a stronger Organization.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As we cross the 70th year of our existence, we find ourselves standing at a new starting line, facing both persistent and unprecedented challenges. I cite chronic poverty, life-threatening epidemic, like Ebola, extremist terrorist groups, and others.

In this era, which is labeled as “information explosion, “big data society” “the third industrial revolution”, “digital economy epoch”, or “internet economy”, and in the actual situation where “UNESCO is walking on the ice, it is no longer difficult but dangerous for the organization” -- can we just stand with our arms crossed? Rather, must we not adjust ourselves to the emerging needs brought about by such changes and developments?

UNESCO has always been playing the leading role in human and social development – this is our goal and it is our expectation.

Today, and in the future, we cannot expect, we cannot tolerate anything less.

We cannot, we must not let our Organization lag behind the times.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

To maintain and carry forward our traditional role requires that all the member states join their hands, in encouraging and organizing the domestic and international experts, researchers to study the global emerging challenges, characteristics of the new times.

Their contribution will be crucial assets for UNESCO to further elaborate the concepts, theories, standards that meet the need of the future development and continue to guide the human development.

In my eyes, this could be the right way for member states to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the organization -- this would be the best start for planning the next 70 years of UNESCO.

To achieve this, the solidarity of all member states is absolutely indispensable.

Our partners need to be further mobilized, our network needs to be further enlarged, and our concern needs to be more focused.

We need to always remember what is the soul of the Organization, to always remember that which is our responsibility.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Looking back must allow us to better position and adapt for the future.

On the eve of 2015, every member state is urged to further mobilize the resources in different ways, in view to relight the vitality, dynamism and value of UNESCO, and this mission, I agree, has never been more important.

In the end, I wish the success of this session of the meeting.

Thank you very much!

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