



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

# **Launch ceremony for the celebration of the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of UNESCO and Tribute to Nelson Mandela**

## **Intervention**

**of**

**H.E. Dr HAO Ping**

**President of the General Conference  
Vice-Minister of Education  
of the People's Republic of China**

UNESCO Headquarters, 31 October 2014

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

It is an honor, and a privilege, to attend this tribute to Nelson Mandela, a warrior who fought fight all his life for freedom, equality, justice and peace.

To open the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration of the organization in commemorating this great figure echoes UNESCO's aim of mission, as his achievements and his bringing are concrete examples of what UNESCO can produce in the minds of women and men.

15 years ago, that was in 1999, I welcomed Nelson Mandela in person with honor and high respect in Peking University, where I was working.

It was his first visit to China as President of South Africa, but a return to Peking University where he gave the speech for the first time to Chinese college students two years before, and where he chose to give, once again, a speech to the young generation before leaving politics.

He was then 81 years old.

Even until today, I could still recall clearly how he shook my hands with a good squeeze accompanied by an equally strong gaze into my eyes; how he proceeded on to the podium with slow but firm steps; how he talked about the drastic international situation with serenity but strong attitude, with his fist raised up in the air from time to time.

The whole hall of audience, including me, was infected by the aura of charm and power that surrounded this great man.

In his speech, he talked about the poverty, the unequal development of countries against the economic globalization, regional security and peace, etc. These are the challenges that still exist today and, needs the coordinated efforts of generation by generation.

That is why, ladies and gentlemen,

Honoring the memory and commitment of Nelson Mandela is an encouragement and motivation for us, as he can always serve as our beacon that guides us in pursuing the path to peace.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Looking beyond the 70th anniversary, our organization is standing at a crossroad, going through the unprecedented difficulties.

Hence, to survive from the storm we are currently facing, our hands needs to be joined, our efforts needs to be unified; we should gaze together into our common future. Only from the solidarity can we reach the sustainable peace, this is what Nelson Mandela taught us, and I believe, this is what we should always keep in heart.

Thank you very much for your attention.

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