



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

Address by Irina Bokova,

Director-General of UNESCO

**on the occasion of Inauguration of the International Knowledge Centre for
Engineering Sciences and Technology**

Beijing, China, 2 June 2014

Mr Song Jin, Vice Chair of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference,

Mr Xu Kuangdi, Vice Chair of the 10th Chinese People's Political Consultative
Conference,

Zhou Ji, President of the Chinese Academy of Engineering,

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am deeply honoured to be with you today, to launch the *International Knowledge
Centre for Engineering Sciences and Technology*, a category 2 centre under the
auspices of UNESCO.

I wish to thank you all for attending this event, and I thank Mr Zhou Ji and the
Chinese Academy of Engineering for bringing this initiative to fruition.

Let me express my gratitude also to the Government of the People's Republic of
China and National Commission of China for UNESCO for its leadership.

The *International Knowledge Centre for Engineering Sciences and Technology*
embodies a commitment that both China and UNESCO share.

This is the commitment to support all countries in their aspirations to build
knowledge societies -- the commitment to strengthen the ability of all societies to
create and share knowledge, for the benefit of all.

On 27 March, I had the honour of welcoming His Excellency President Xi Jinping to UNESCO Headquarters in Paris.

On this occasion, the President spoke of the importance of scientific cooperation – in his words -- *“to spread the seeds of peace of the idea of peace far and wide.”*

Advancing cooperation in engineering, the sciences and technology has always been at the core of UNESCO’s work.

In fact, it may be considered part of our DNA, as UNESCO was born in 1945 at the Institute of Civil Engineers in London.

The world has changed dramatically since then, but the need for engineering, science and technology has only deepened.

This is why this new Centre is so important.

Engineering and innovation, translating research into practical goods and services for the good of all – these are essential for all countries today, and especially for developing countries.

This new Centre will develop a digital library on engineering and technology, focusing on issues of importance to developing countries.

It will provide training on data processing and analysis, and it will encourage international exchanges, with a focus on South-South cooperation and on climate change.

This UNESCO category 2 Centre joins nine other such centres in China-- six of which focus on the natural sciences.

It will strengthen ever more the partnership that UNESCO has forged with China, to promote inclusive and sustainable human development, and this includes 32 UNESCO Biospheres Reserves, which I consider ‘living laboratories’ of sustainability, along with 25 UNESCO university chairs.

This includes also the *Scientific Advisory Board*, launched this January, whose secretariat is hosted by UNESCO and which includes Professor Ke Gong, President of Nankai University.

The Scientific Advisory Board will provide advice on science, technology and innovation for sustainable development to the Secretary-General and Executive Heads of UN organizations.

More than ever, I believe we need today to craft new approaches to engineering and the sciences -- through education, through recruitment and training, through capacity-building, in order to address the needs of societies in resolving complex new and challenges, today and in the future.

These are the goals of the UNESCO Engineering Initiative and the objectives of this new Centre.

In all this, China plays a leading role, and I wish to thank most especially His Excellency Mr President Xi Jinping for his commitment and vision.

We see China's leadership in the sciences – as well as in education, and across the mandate and competences of UNESCO.

In this spirit, I wish once again to congratulate the People's Republic of China on launching this *International Knowledge Centre for Engineering Sciences and Technology*, under the auspices of UNESCO.

I wish the Centre and the Chinese Academy of Engineering every success, and I look forward to moving forward together to mobilize the power of engineering for a sustainable future for all.

Thank you.