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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 the High-Level Political Forum under the auspices of  
ECOSOC**

*Panel session on 'Prospects for the future – projections, scenarios and new and  
emerging issues'*

**New York, 20 July 2016**

Mr Chair H.E. Mr Joerg Lauber, Permanent Representative of Switzerland to the UN  
and Vice President of ECOSOC,

Dear Panelists,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The 2030 Agenda is “agenda of the people, by the people, for the people,” embodying  
a new vision of prosperity, the planet and peace for the next 15 years, a compelling  
set of commitments that will shape the world for the generations to come.

It is therefore only appropriate that today’s session is dedicated to discussing the  
future orientation and forward –looking nature of this Agenda.

It is already clear that this Agenda has ushered in a new era for sustainable  
development, bringing nothing short of a paradigm shift on so many levels.

It is a paradigm shift, because all 17 Sustainable Development Goals are connected  
to each other, putting a premium on comprehensive approaches, on partnership and  
alliances.

It is a paradigm shift, because it overcomes the North-South dichotomy, collaborating  
in a universal manner, based on the diversity and experience of each country; country  
experiences, which have been so insightfully shared in the National Voluntary  
Reviews of this HLPF.

It is a paradigm shift, because it builds on the empowerment of the people, to help understand and craft innovative solutions to challenges we do not even know today. It is a departure from 'business as usual', in thinking and policy.

This Agenda bears witness to the new role of scientific research in all development issues. Science, technology and innovation are key means for achieving the SDGs – a breakthrough compared to the first set of Millennium Development Goals. STI is also a key tool that will help us to bring together the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement.

The scale and the complexity of challenges we face today – on the ocean, the environment, on climate change, on social transformation and inclusion – call for a new unity among sciences.

Scientific specialization has enabled unprecedented progress over the last century, but scientists have travelled so far in their respective disciplines that we feel we must bring together information that is dispersed. It calls for more and better integrated science, and better governance among all UN scientific tools.

It requires better sharing and transfer of technology and innovation, enabling improved access for all to the best solutions at hand, including through South-South and triangular cooperation.

It calls for a stronger science-policy interface, to ensure that the best possible data and ideas are available to policy makers. Evidence-based projections into the future can be a powerful tool to inform our actions. For example, according to recent data by the UNESCO Global Education Monitoring Report, neither universal lower secondary nor universal upper secondary education will be reached by 2030 at the recent rates of progress. – This constitutes a strong call for action and acceleration of our efforts.

It also calls for a tighter dialogue among scientific communities and decision-makers, who sometimes speak a different language.

This is also the role of UNESCO to bridge these gaps, through the work of the Scientific Advisory Board to the UN Secretary General, through the work of the IPBES Platform on biodiversity, research programmes and our Institute for Statistics.

This session today is an opportunity to foster the spirit of innovation in delivering on the promises of Agenda 2030, and I look forward to the deliberations of our distinguished panel and audience.

You are then asked to give the floor to the panelists:

H.E. Mr Simon Gaviria, Minister for National Planning, Colombia

H. E. Dr. Edgar Gutierrez-Espeleta, President of the 2th session of the UN Environment Assembly, and Minister for Environment and Energy, Costa Rica.

Prof. Dr. Fumiko Kasuga, Director, National Institute of Health Sciences, Japan, and Future Earth Global Hub Director, Japan.

Prof. Dr. Stewart Lockie, Director, The Cairns Institute, James Cook University, Australia.

Prof. Dr. Nebojsa Nakicenovic, Deputy Director, International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis, Austria.