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Organización
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منظمة الأمم المتحدة
للتربية والعلم والثقافة

联合国教育、
科学及文化组织

**Address by Mr Koïchiro Matsuura, Director-General of UNESCO,
on the occasion of the Opening of the accompanying exhibition
of the Symposium on "EFA in the Sultanate
of Oman: From Access to Success"**

UNESCO, 5 December 2006

Honourable Minister of Education of Oman,
Mr President of the General Conference,
Mr Director-General of the Arab Bureau of Education for the Gulf States,
Mr Deputy Secretary-General of the National Commission of Oman to UNESCO,
Mr Ambassador,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am delighted to have the opportunity to address you at the inauguration of this exhibition, which offers us a rich representation of the progress made by the Sultanate of Oman towards Education for All (EFA).

Let me express my appreciation once again to His Majesty Qaboos bin Sa'id Al 'Bu Sa'id, Sultan of Oman, for the imagination and care with which this impressive display has been mounted. I would also like to congratulate Mr Yahya Bin Saud Al Sulaimi, the Minister of Education of Oman, and Dr Musa Bin Jaafar Bin Hassan, the President of UNESCO's General Conference, for their support in organizing this event.

This exhibition is a most fitting and valuable complement to our two-day symposium. Through a series of paintings, drawings, posters, publications and documentaries, it showcases the great success stories in Oman's efforts to achieve EFA. One of UNESCO's chief concerns as lead coordinator for EFA is to raise the profile of good practices and promote the sharing of experience. We believe that it

is crucial for countries to learn from one another, both within their own region and further afield. By hosting this exhibition, we are therefore delighted to provide an opportunity for the lessons gained from Oman's educational achievements to be exchanged, and used for the benefits of others.

This is the second exhibition that Oman has organized at UNESCO Headquarters this year. In June we enjoyed a four-day celebration of Omani cultures and traditions, organized to mark the proclamation of Muscat as the Arab Cultural Capital for 2006.

Today's exhibition provides an excellent complement to this celebration. As I have frequently emphasized, education and culture are closely linked, and these connections are eloquently expressed in the display before us. Education is a means not only to enable learners to appreciate their own cultural heritage, but also to access that of others. Oman's commitment to cultural diversity, dialogue and understanding, sets an example in the region and beyond: namely, that difference should enrich our lives, not separate us.

This exhibition is important because it represents visibly what EFA progress actually looks like. It provides a model of success in EFA, and a source of inspiration and guidance for other countries to follow.

In closing, let me applaud the Sultanate of Oman's accomplishments. Their example shows that, through sustained and determined efforts, EFA can indeed be achieved.

Thank you.