



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
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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 the tea ceremony offered by UNESCO Goodwill**

**Ambassador Dr Genshitsu Sen**

**to celebration the 70th anniversary of UNESCO**

**UNESCO, 13 November 2015**

Excellency Ms Kuni Sato, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary,  
Permanent Delegate of Japan to UNESCO,

Dr Genshitsu Sen,

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am delighted to welcome you all to UNESCO today.

As you know, we are celebrating this year the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the creation of UNESCO.

There are many different ways of celebrating.

This is why I am so grateful to you Dr Genshitsu Sen, our Goodwill Ambassador, for coming again today, to share a tradition that is so dear to the Japanese people, and to your own family.

Your presence here today also means that we are close to the hearts and minds of the Japanese people.

You know well that in the wake of a devastating war, UNESCO was created on the idea that peace had to be built on new foundations, founded on human rights and dignity.

For UNESCO, peace is more than the absence of war.

It is the existence of vibrant societies, societies of inclusion and justice, where all women and men are included and empowered.

This is the spirit of Agenda 2030 – an agenda for the people and by the people.

This humanist vision has never been so urgent. We wish to see it inscribed every day.

In these times of rapid change, peace must be a spirit carried forward by each of us.

It must be an everyday reality, expressed in gestures of respect and understanding towards others, towards the planet.

This vision finds embodiment, I believe, in *CHADO*, the Japanese Way of Tea, and it finds a master in Dr Sen Genshitsu.

This is a vision of understanding the other, of respect.

In this spirit, I am deeply honoured to receive Dr Sen at UNESCO for this wonderful ceremony.

Dr Sen, UNESCO is, of course, your home!

You have been a *UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador* since March 2012, and I wish to renew my gratitude to you, for your commitment to peace, for embodying and carrying UNESCO's message of mutual respect and understanding across the world.

Our shared message of tolerance and respect was sent during the tea ceremony that you, Dr Sen, held here, in March 2012, on the occasion of the commemoration of the first anniversary of the Great East Japan Earthquake. It was a message of confidence and hope.

You shared the same message during the ceremony held in November 2012, in Kyoto, to celebrate the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the UNESCO World Heritage Convention.

I recall well the beautiful tea ceremony you held during the *World Conference on Education for Sustainable Development*, at Aichi Nagoya, in November 2014.

The same spirit of peace inspired the tea ceremony you held, Dr Sen, at the Headquarters of the United Nations on the *International Day of Peace*, on 21 September last. I know how much the United Nations Secretary-General respects your message of peace and mutual understanding.

This was right before the *United Nations Summit on Sustainable Development*, when Governments agreed on the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*.

This Agenda is inspired by a new vision of peace for all women and men, for the planet, over the next 15 years.

UNESCO's mandate is deeply embedded in the new Agenda, and I am determined to do everything to empower women and men for peace, through education, the sciences, culture, communication and information.

This is why it is so meaningful to hold this tea ceremony during this 38<sup>th</sup> session of the UNESCO General Conference.

On Monday and Tuesday next week, the UNESCO Leaders' Forum will bring Heads of States and Government to this House from across the world, to celebrate the Organisation's 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary, to explore past achievements, to look to the future together.

This is an opportunity to share in the vision of peace that guides all UNESCO's action.

Dr Sen,

The ideals underlying the Way of Tea are known in Japanese as WA, KEI, SEI, and JAKU.

In English, these are Harmony, Respect, Purity, and Tranquillity.

These express the traditional spiritual culture of Japanese society.

Dr Sen, I wish to express my deep thanks to you for sharing this expression of peace with UNESCO today, for accompany our ambitions for development and peace.

Let me thank also the Permanent Delegation of Japan to UNESCO and the *Urasenke Foundation* for this important event.

Thank you.