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Organización  
de las Naciones Unidas  
para la Educación,  
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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 Inauguration Ceremony of the International Centre  
for Engineering Education, comprising the signing of the Agreement  
establishing the Centre as a Category 2 Centre, under the auspices of  
UNESCO**

**Beijing, 6 June 2016**

Excellency Professor Zhou Ji, President of the Chinese Academy of Engineering,

Mr Qiu Yong, President of Tsinghua University,

All good friends from the Ministry of Education and the Chinese National Commission  
for UNESCO,

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am deeply honoured to sign in person this agreement establishing the *International  
Centre for Engineering Education*, as a Category 2 Centre under the auspices of  
UNESCO.

I wish to express deep gratitude to Professor Zhou Ji for his leadership in this  
process.

I am very grateful to the Universities of Tsinghua and Beihang for their engagement.

Most of all, let me thank the Government of the People's Republic of China and the  
National Commission of China for UNESCO for their constant support.

I can hardly think of a better place than China to celebrate the power of engineering.

Over the past decades, China has amazed the world through its transformation – and  
engineering has been one of the engines sustaining, nourishing and driving this all-  
encompassing process.

Engineering is vital to all countries today, especially in the developing world, which face considerable challenges that require all the creativity and innovation that engineering can muster.

This is why engineering must stand at the heart of all efforts to take forward the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* and the *Paris Climate Change Agreement*, to eradicate poverty and advance inclusive growth, to respond to the consequences of climate change, to promote the sustainable development of all societies.

The power of the sciences was evoked by President XI Jinping on 27 March, 2014, when he paid the historic visit to UNESCO.

He spoke then of the importance of scientific cooperation “*to spread the seeds of peace so that they will take root in the hearts and minds of the world’s people*”.

This spirit underpins the *International Centre for Engineering Education*, to focus on deepening industry-university cooperation and on widening educational innovation, across the region and internationally.

This same spirit guides the longstanding cooperation between China and UNESCO in this field.

In June 2014, I was honoured to participate in the *International Conference on Engineering, Science and Technology*, organised by the Government of China and the Chinese Academy of Engineering, and opened by President Mr. XI Jinping.

Last November, the *International Forum on Engineering Education* strengthened further the foundations for collaboration between Chinese science and engineering communities and UNESCO, namely in shaping the second edition of the *UNESCO Engineering Report*.

Just a few days ago (15-18 May, 2016), UNESCO, the Chinese Academy of Engineering and the Chinese Academy of Sciences organized here in Beijing the first *UNESCO Science Centres Coordination Meeting*, bringing together 45 science centres from across the world -- I believe the *Beijing Action Plan*, adopted at the

meeting, provides the basis to deepen the role of engineering in taking forward the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

In this spirit, let me thank you all once again for your support to the *International Centre for Engineering Education*, which will join with the *International Knowledge Centre for Engineering Sciences and Technology* that Professor ZHOU Ji and I inaugurated two years ago, here in Beijing, to strengthen ever more our work to harness the power of engineering and the sciences for the benefit of all.

Thank you for your attention.