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Organisation
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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
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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 Award Ceremony of the 2016 UNESCO-Japan Prize

on

Education for Sustainable Development

UNESCO, 11 October 2016

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

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a pleasure to be here with today, to present the awards of the second edition of the *UNESCO-Japan Prize on Education for Sustainable Development*.

I wish to thank Ambassador Sato and the Government of Japan for generously funding this Prize, and for their continuous support to UNESCO.

I remember well the first edition of the Prize, during the General Conference last year... two months after the world agreed on the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*... one month before the *Paris Climate Agreement*.

I believe these should be seen as a single, new, global and transformative agenda, for people, for prosperity, for peace, for the planet.

These agreements were struck between Governments, and reflect new commitment to building a better world for all, to leave no one behind.

Political leadership at the highest level is essential, we know this.

We know also the lesson expressed in the UNESCO Constitution.

Allow me to remind you of the words of the preamble:

“A peace based exclusively upon the political and economic arrangements of governments would not be a peace which could secure the unanimous, lasting and sincere support of the peoples of the world, and that the peace must therefore be founded, if it is not to fail, upon the intellectual and moral solidarity of mankind.”

I believe this vision has never been so relevant.

For lasting impact, the historic agreements of 2015 must be embedded in societies... they must be owned by individual women and men.

This is the importance of education for sustainable development.

More than ever, we need new forms of solidarity with each other.

We need new bases of harmony with the planet.

We need new ways of seeing, being and acting, *in* and *with* the world.

This is the importance of this *UNESCO-Japan Prize*... to shine light on individuals making a difference... to reward women and men changing the world from the ground-up..

This is part of the *Global Action Programme on Education for Sustainable Development* UNESCO launched in 2014, as follow-up to the ground-breaking *United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development*.

Japan has played a leading role all throughout, including the *UNESCO World Conference on Education for Sustainable Development*, in Aichi-Nagoya, in November, 2014, for which I am deeply grateful.

The first edition of the UNESCO-Japan Prize showcased the work of three outstanding organizations, from Germany, Guatemala and El Salvador, and Indonesia.

This year, nominations increased by 100 percent – with 120 submissions by 64 Member States and 10 NGOs in official partnership with UNESCO.

Let me take this opportunity to thank the Jury, chaired by Mr Oscar Motomura, for their support, and for identifying three projects that are breaking new ground.

Mesdames et Messieurs,

Notre premier lauréat est le *Centre pour la régénération et le développement communautaire au Cameroun*, récompensé pour son programme pour l'intégration de l'éducation au développement durable dans les écoles et les communautés à travers le pays.

Dans ce programme, de jeunes éducateurs interviennent dans les écoles et par le biais des centres d'apprentissage communautaires, afin de permettre aux jeunes marginalisés, aux femmes et groupes autochtones dans les communautés difficiles à atteindre, de réduire la pauvreté de préserver l'environnement.

Des familles entières sont formées aux thèmes du développement durable, en particulier l'agriculture intelligente face au climat.

Depuis son lancement il y a cinq ans, le programme a déjà accompagné près de 40 000 étudiants, 260 enseignants et 3.600 familles.

Ce programme a permis d'améliorer non seulement le bien-être mais il a fait plus encore : il a changé des mentalités, et c'est ce qui rend tout le reste possible.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Our second laureate is the *Okayama ESD Promotion Commission* from Japan, awarded for its holistic "Okayama ESD Project".

This impressive "whole-city approach," involving a range of sectors and actors, is a locally-rooted example of managing a city sustainably.

In this framework, citizens of Okayama can take part in activities and workshops, in community learning centres, schools, parks, shopping malls -- people of all ages can meet and exchange in "ESD Café" sessions, and university students are encouraged to undertake "ESD internships" with local NGOs.

So far, 150,000 people have participated in activities led by groups and organizations from the *Okayama ESD Promotion Commission*.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Our third laureate is the National Union of Students from the United Kingdom, honoured for its nation-wide change and engagement programme, “Green Impact”.

Led by student mentors, this targets university staff to make their workplace greener, while helping them cut costs.

It covers an array of themes, from wellbeing to traditional environmental management, ranging from simple actions, such as advice on double-sided printing, to setting up ethical credit unions.

Participating departments gain yearly awards for sustainability actions, like creating a community garden.

Having reached more than 100,000 university students and staff, Green Impact is already being adapted by institutions outside higher education, such as hospitals and fire brigades.

Each of these initiatives is innovative.

Each sets a powerful example of local action for positive change.

Each of them can be taken elsewhere, scaled up, for global and lasting impact.

I see these as foundations for the “intellectual and moral solidarity of humanity” put forward in the UNESCO Constitution.

In this spirit, I wish to congratulate each Laureate and I thank them for the inspiring examples they are setting.

Thank you.