



Celebration of the 200th session of the Executive Board of UNESCO
04 - 18 October 2016

Message from Koichiro Matsuura
Director-General of UNESCO
(1999-2005)

Dear Mr. Chairperson of the Executive Board,

Allow me to extend my wholehearted congratulations to the Executive Board on the momentous occasion of its 200th meeting.

The Executive Board has been playing a crucial role in the execution of UNESCO's important mandate, as stated in its constitution, ever since the creation of the Organization in 1945.

With regard to the ten-year period from 1999 to 2009, during which I was Director-General of the Organization, I collaborated very closely with the Board in managing the Organization in pursuance of the important objectives outlined in the UNESCO constitution. The Board was always receptive to the new initiatives I proposed to improve the management of the Organization and thereby to strengthen UNESCO's activities in the five key areas of Education, Natural Science, Social Science, Culture and Communication, including the adoption of new international Conventions and Recommendations. Thanks to such close collaboration, we succeeded jointly in achieving many positive results.

Occasionally, the Board expressed some concern that I might be deviating from the right course of action, which almost unfailingly caused me to reconsider and accept its advice. On the other hand, I resisted when the Board tried to micromanage and prevent the reforms I believed were necessary to improve the administering of the Organization. Luckily the Board always accepted my position and backed off micromanaging.

Looking back, I am very proud to say that during the ten years of my mandate at UNESCO, the Board and I collaborated very positively, for which I am grateful.

Koichiro Matsuura
30 September 2016