



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

联合国
教育、科学及文化组织

talkmate

TALKMATE
Fluent in Friendship.
2016-2020

全球说
世界最大的在线语言学习平台

The Launch Ceremony of Joint Partnership
“World Atlas of Languages”
and
The Roundtable Discussion
“Language Matters for Development”
8 July 2016
Kempinski Hotel Beijing Lufthansa Center, Beijing



Organizers

UNESCO and Talkmate

Context

Language has the capacity to reconcile the ideas and values of people from diverse cultural, social, economic, religious and professional backgrounds. It is a key contributor to dialogue, reconciliation, tolerance and peace. Language matters for sustainable development.

At UNESCO's Headquarters Chinese President Mr. Xi Jinping said, "*Civilizations have become richer and more colorful with exchanges and mutual learning*". Now more people have realized that the role of language is essential for quality education, economic growth, socio-cultural development and peaceful dialogue among various cultures and civilizations. It therefore is a key component for the creation of truly inclusive, open, diverse and participatory knowledge societies.

However, the rate of language endangerment and disappearance has increased significantly over the past decades due to rapid social, political and economic transformations in the world. Disappearing language is a cause for serious concern that over 50% of some 6700 languages spoken nowadays are in danger of disappearing. At the same time, there has been a renewed interest in safeguarding linguistic diversity as a vehicle of development. Moreover, the role of cutting edge Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) is growing in language documentation, revitalization and inter-generational transmission. ICTs are vital educational and communication tool helping communities, public and private organizations to provide access to information and knowledge to all citizens.

Since 1993, UNESCO has carried out its Endangered Languages Programme to increase linguistic diversity drawing attention of the international community to the multiple challenges communicates face in terms of language vitality, maintenance and shift. Special efforts were taken to monitor linguistic diversity through its Atlas of Languages in Danger. In 2003, UNESCO's Governing Bodies have adopted a normative instrument entitled "Recommendation concerning the Promotion and Use of Multilingualism and Universal Access to Cyberspace". This encouraged countries around the world to take concrete actions on the development of multilingual content and systems, facilitate access to networks, develop public domain content and reaffirm the equitable balance between the rights-holders and public interest.

By creating online multilingual learning platform and bridging the language speakers and learners to take social responsibility on promotion of linguistic diversity, TALKMATE has been actively engaging in initiatives of safeguarding and teaching global languages.

Building on the firm foundation to increase linguistic diversity around the world, UNESCO and TALKMATE agreed to cooperate for the implementation of the project entitled "World Atlas of Languages". The overall objective of the joint partnership is to contribute to the safeguarding of the world's linguistic diversity, and the promotion of multilingualism in cyberspace through effective application of ICTs. The global initiative calls for the safeguarding of linguistic diversity by maintaining language resources, increasing accessibility to and dissemination of these items through ICTs, cooperation among institutional networks and civic engagement.

The joint launch event will introduce this new and exciting collaboration which brings together UNESCO and Talkmate to work on the development of the World Atlas of Languages. This launch event will give the opportunity to all interested parties to find out more about the project and upcoming opportunities. Accordingly, the roundtable on "Language matters for development" is held for discussion to assess the current situation of linguistic diversity, identify existing challenges and new opportunities arising from scientific and technological development, and exchange the valuable recommendations with different stakeholders for the development of the World Atlas of Languages.

Tentative Agenda

The Launch Ceremony of the Joint Partnership “World Atlas of Languages”

8 July 2016

Venue: Kempinski Hotel Beijing Lufthansa Center
Address : 50 Liangmaqiao Road, Chaoyang District, China, 100125,
People's Republic of China
Tel :+86 10 6465 3388

13:00 – 13:30 Registration

13:30 – 14:15 The Launch Ceremony of the Joint Partnership

Master of Ceremony: Ms Xiang Lin, China Central Television

Opening remarks by Mr Du Yue, Secretary-General, National Commission of the People's Republic of China for UNESCO

Opening address by Mr Indrajit Banerjee, Director, Knowledge Societies Division, Communication and Information Sector, UNESCO

Welcome address by Mr Vincent Wen, Founder and CEO of Talkmate, People's Republic of China

14:15 – 14:20 Launch of the Joint Partnership Ceremony

14:20 – 14:30 Coffee break

Tentative Agenda

The Roundtable Discussion “Language Matters for Development”

14:30 – 16:00 Theme 1. Language Matters for Sustainable Development

Moderator: Mr Indrajit Banerjee, Director, Knowledge Societies Division, Communication and Information Sector, UNESCO

Speakers:

- Professor Cao Zhiyun, Vice-President, Beijing Language and Culture University; Chief Expert, Project of Chinese Language Resources Protection, People’s Republic of China
- Mr Arnold Obermayr, President, European Union National Institutes for Culture (EUNIC-China) and the Counselor of the Austrian Embassy in Beijing, Austria
- Professor Su De, Dean, School of Education, Minzu University, People’s Republic of China
- Professor Bai Bibo, Institute of Ethnic Cultures and Social Development, Yuxi Normal University, People’s Republic of China

Discussion with participants

16.00 – 17.25 Theme 2. Digital Solutions for Promotion of Linguistic Diversity

Moderator: Ms Irmgarda Kasinskaite-Buddeberg, Programme specialist, Knowledge Societies Division, Communication and Information Sector, UNESCO

- Dr Duan Liping, Vice-Chair of the Bureau of the Intergovernmental Information for All Programme (IFAP) and Research Fellow, International Cooperation, Institute of Scientific and Technical Information of China, People’s Republic of China
- Professor Li Juanzi, Tsinghua University, Expert for Platform Construction, Project of Chinese Language Resources Protection, People’s Republic of China
- Mr Vincent Wen, Founder and CEO of Talkmate, People’s Republic of China

Discussion with participants

17.25 – 17.30 Closing remarks by Ms Marielza Oliveira, Director, UNESCO Office in Beijing

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Please RSVP to the launch event and roundtable:

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