

Dr. Du Yu's Speech at the International Youth Forum

Creativity and Heritage along the Silk Road

Quanzhou, China

April 20 2017

Dear Madam Li Hong, Vice Chairperson of the CPPCC, Fujian Province,

Mr. Kang Tao, Mayor of Quanzhou City,

Dear Ms. Marielza Oliveira, Director and Representative of UNESCO Beijing Office

Dear Mr. Dhirendra Bhatnagar, President of WFUCA,

Mr. Main de Boissiere, Minister Counselor of French Embassy in China,

Dear Mr. Chi Chiew Sum, Consul General of Singapore in Xiamen,

Dear Youth Representatives

Ladies and Gentlemen:

【回顾长沙】 It gives me great pleasure to meet all of you again

in Quanzhou after the impressive opening ceremony in Yuelu Academy 3 days ago. I was not able to stay longer with you in Changsha due to other arrangements. However, I was briefed everyday by my colleagues about the Forum proceedings, about your active participation, heated discussion and joyful moments when you saw the sparkling fireworks or when you tasted delicious food in Changsha. All of you have contributed to The Changsha Declaration. I commend all of you for your creativity, energy and solidarity in making sure the first session of our Forum a great success.

【简述泉州】 As was introduced by the previous speakers this morning, the second session of our Forum would focus more on heritage. Quanzhou in itself is the best manifestation of diversity. You will see during the following two days a crucial Confucius Temple in Southeast China, a titanic Taoist Statue, a magnificent Mosque from the 11th century, and the only Mani Statue in the world. Quanzhou also has a booming private sector with thousands of small and medium enterprises as well as dozens of famous clothing brands. The Chinese National Commission for UNESCO is very proud to invite all of you to Quanzhou, to feel Quanzhou and fall in love with Quanzhou, like Mr. Doudou

Diene and Mr. Guo Zhan, the two presenters before me.

【点评 Doudou】 Listening to their stories, looking at you, I cannot hold thinking of my youth time. When Mr. Doudou Diene led the Maritime Silk Road delegation to Quanzhou in 1991, I was working in Paris. I celebrated the event with my colleagues at that time. Over the past 26 years, many people, like Mr. Doudou Diene, Mr. Guo Zhan, Mr. Xie Guozhen etc. have been making continuous efforts to the preservation of heritage sites in Quanzhou, to promotion of diverse values the sites represent: peaceful co-existence and unity in diversity.

【UNESCO 使命、勉励青年】 That echoes with the mandates of missions of UNESCO, to build peace in the minds of woman and man. During the past 70 years of its establishment, UNESCO has been leading the world in education and sciences, advancing humanity and promoting cultural diversity and dialogue.

Dear young friends,

There are 1.2 billion young people in the world. 87% are living in developing countries. Some of them have never gone beyond their countries or even their own cities or townships. You are the lucky ones. You have access to quality education. You have the resources for international exchanges. And of course You are fortunate to participate in this Forum.

How are you going to transform your advantage in the society into opportunities of serving others? How are you going to get along with people from other cultures and religions, or even people from countries that are at war with your own country? How are you going to take actions for a better future of all youth worldwide, despite various difficulties and obstacles?

Young people are open-minded, sensitive to emerging trends, and you have the wisdom and courage to tackle the challenges. Young people should understand better than us that, the joints efforts toward common goals could be based on the respect of differences in terms of religion and culture. I appreciate your work in the fields of creativity and heritage. I appreciate your active advocacy for a green and sustainable life style, which is a

determined and forward-looking concept in favor of the future of our planet.

Dear youth representatives,

【丝路-丝路精神】 The ancient Silk Road had starting points and finishing points, but the modern day Silk Road is open-ended. It is more of a spirit. The Spirit of Silk Road is about adventuring into the unknown areas. It is about collaboration with other countries and peoples. It is about seeking win-win solutions for the challenges that we human beings as a whole are facing. It has no boundaries.

【谈自己】 For the past 40 years, I was privileged to do work closely related to UNESCO, in the areas of UNESCO's scope of work. I worked at the UNESCO Secretariat, at the Chinese Permanent Delegation to UNESCO and Chinese National Commission for UNESCO. UNESCO is my life, in my blood, my laughter and my tears. All the efforts are so rewarding. I would like to encourage all of you to continue engaging yourselves to UNESCO's missions and work.

【毛主席语录结束】 You must remember well the great statue of Chairman Mao Zedong that you saw during the Xiangjiang River cruise in Changsha. When Chairman Mao visited the Soviet Union in 1957 when he was 64 years old, he chose to speak to youth studying at Moscow University out of his busy schedule,. He said to the exciting crowds with strong Changsha accent: the world is yours as well as ours, but in the last analysis, it is yours. You young people, full of vigor and vitality, are in the bloom of life, like the sun at eight or nine o'clock in the morning. Our hope is placed on you.

Thank you.