



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

Organisation
des Nations Unies
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
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 Opening of the *UNESCO World Conference on
Education for Sustainable Development***

Aichi-Nagoya, Japan, 10 November 2014

Their Imperial Highnesses the Crown Prince and Crown Princess

Her Royal Highness Princess Lalla Hasnaa of Morocco, President of the
Mohammed VI Foundation for the Protection of the Environment,

Excellency Mr Hakubun Shimomura, Minister of Education, Culture, Sports,
Science and Technology of Japan,

Honourable Mr Hideaki Ohmura, Governor of Aichi Prefecture,

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am honoured to be in Aichi-Nagoya today – this is the culmination of a journey,
and the beginning of a new one.

Let me thank the Government of Japan for organising the *UNESCO World
Conference on Education for Sustainable Development,* along with the City of
Nagoya and the Prefecture of Aichi.

I am deeply grateful to His Imperial Highness Crown Prince Naruhito for his
leadership and commitment.

I thank Her Royal Highness Princess Lalla Hasnaa for the honour of her presence
today.

I have just come from the city of Okayama, where the Minister and I jointly inaugurated the ESD Youth Forum and witnessed the tremendous vitality of participants from the world over.

And today we are in Nagoya -- I can hardly think of a better place for us to explore education for sustainable development.

...a city with a history 2,000 years long.

...a city of rich culture and cutting edge industry.

Nagoya is often associated with the development of Waka poetry, and this reminds of a poem by the Emperor Meiji:

It is our hope

That all the world's oceans

Be joined in peace

So why do the winds and waves

Now rise up in angry rage?

I believe we have all come to Nagoya today with the same unity in the face of adversity, sharing this same aspiration for solidarity against contrary winds.

The stakes are high.

Across the world today, new challenges are emerging that pay no heed to borders or policy lines.

There are rising costs of natural disasters.

There is the deepening impact of climate change.

The planet is under pressure, we are reaching the limits of its boundaries.

This is a call to action, and action has been the spirit guiding the *United Nations Decade on Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014)*, sponsored by Japan and led by UNESCO.

The core message of the UN Decade is one that echoes the opening lines of the UNESCO Constitution.

Building the foundations for lasting peace and sustainable development must start in the minds of women and men.

And this must begin with education.

Education is the way to connect the dots between the social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainable development.

Sustainability requires changes in how we produce and consume.

Fundamentally, it requires new ways of seeing the world, new ways of thinking about our responsibilities to each other and the planet, new ways of acting and behaving as global citizens.

This is why education is the bedrock for sustainability, because it can shape the new values, skills and knowledge we need for the century ahead.

We must build green economies – we also need green societies.

We must draft green legislation and regulations – we need also green citizens.

These ideas have deep roots in Japan, which sponsored and helped drive the *UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development*.

We have come to Nagoya to take stock of ten years of action.

The achievements are there for all to see.

More and more Governments have integrated education strategies, tools and targets into national sustainable development policies -- the mid-decade Conference in Bonn, Germany gave fresh impetus and accelerated this movement.

Through the *Eco Schools* programme, more than 14 million students and 1.2 million teachers in 58 countries are engaged in action-orientated learning for sustainable development.

In Brazil, the *Seeds of Spring* initiative reached 12,700 students in the city of Osasco in 2012, making them change agents in their lives, schools and communities.

Across the world, 550 business schools have signed onto the *Principles for Responsible Management Education*, developed by the UN Global Compact.

Morocco has placed education for sustainable development at the heart of learning, and the development of greener schools -- I wish to recognize the personal commitment and dynamism of Her Royal Highness Princess Lalla Hasnaa, President of the *Mohammed VI Foundation for the Protection of the Environment*, which is leading so many ground-breaking initiatives.

Mesdames et Messieurs,

L'éducation en vue du développement durable a acquis une reconnaissance internationale.

Les Etats ont souligné son importance lors de la Conférence des Nations Unies sur le développement durable, à Rio de Janeiro au Brésil en 2012.

Cette année, le Groupe de travail ouvert sur les objectifs de développement durable a justement proposé que l'éducation en vue du développement durable soit intégré dans l'objectif proposé pour l'éducation, à savoir « *assurer une éducation et un apprentissage de qualité, inclusifs et équitable tout au long de la vie* » - en droite ligne avec l'accord de Mascate, adoptée lors de la réunion de l'UNESCO sur l'Education pour tous à Oman cette année.

La Déclaration de Samoa, adoptée lors de la troisième Conférence internationale sur les Petits États insulaires en développement en Septembre 2014, réaffirme aussi l'importance de l'éducation de qualité pour le développement durable.

Le tout premier Institut de l'UNESCO en Asie - l'Institut Mahatma Gandhi pour l'éducation à la paix et au développement durable, inauguré en 2012, travaille précisément sur ces sujets.

Un mouvement est en marche, qui s'est amplifié durant toute la décennie des Nations Unies, et nous devons accélérer le rythme, pour aider les gouvernements en vue des échéances qui approchent en 2015 :

L'adoption d'un nouvel agenda mondial du développement durable après 2015...

La Conférence COP21 sur le climat qui se tiendra l'année prochaine à Paris, et dont l'UNESCO est un partenaire actif. La Conférence de Lima le mois prochain va dessiner le chemin vers COP 21.

La Conférence mondiale d'Aïchi-Nagoya va nourrir le Forum mondial sur l'éducation qui se tiendra à Incheon, en République de Corée, en 2015, et qui doit être un tremplin vers les politiques d'éducation du futur.

Voilà l'enjeu du Programme mondial d'action pour l'éducation en vue du développement durable : construire une éducation adaptée aux enjeux du 21^{ème} siècle, qui réponde aux besoins de la société civile.

C'est un projet fondamentalement humaniste, et pour réussir, nous devons compter sur le soutien de tous les partenaires, gouvernements et secteur privé, et la présence de tant de ministres, d'experts, de jeunes leaders, est un signe d'unité, un signe d'encouragement et un appel à se mobiliser.

Je vous remercie pour votre attention.