

38th session of the General Conference of UNESCO
Speech by the head of the Japanese delegation
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Mr. President,
Madame Director-General,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

First of all, let me express my sincere congratulations on your appointment, Mr. President.

Mr. President,

As UNESCO commemorates its 70th anniversary this year, the 38th session of the General Conference is extremely important for UNESCO's future. Japan would like to provide all possible support for the continuous reform initiatives advanced by Madame Director-General Bokova.

Mr. President,

The Japanese Government is firmly determined to ensure that all people should enjoy the opportunity for accessing equal and quality education, as well as the opportunity for lifelong learning. We hope that the Education 2030 Framework for Action, adopted yesterday, be implemented steadily from now on.

This September, the Japanese Government announced a new strategy on education cooperation entitled the Learning Strategy for Peace and Growth. In line with this strategy, we will promote quality education for all, sustainable development, and human resources development, which is the foundation for the potential growth of the Member States.

The Japanese Government organized the UNESCO World Conference on ESD held last November, at which the Aichi-Nagoya Declaration on Education for Sustainable Development was adopted. We hope that UNESCO and the Member States will make further efforts in implementing ESD, in line with the Global Action Programme with its five priority action areas.

Mr. President,

We believe that it is important to promote “Sustainability Science,” an integrated approach to address global challenges by harnessing the power of the natural sciences, social sciences, and humanities, in order to build sustainable society. We hope that UNESCO and the Member States will pursue further deliberations to promote sustainability science.

Mr. President,

On this occasion, we should reflect back on the aspiration that “it is in the minds of men that the defenses of peace must be constructed,” which is the motto of UNESCO. Whatever we say or do here at UNESCO, it should be in line with this basic spirit of UNESCO. In this sense, protecting World Heritage, Intangible Cultural Heritage and Documentary Heritage, and transmitting such heritages to the next generation, is at the forefront for building the defenses of peace. It should be pointed out that such activities in the field of culture must unite, not divide nations, as Madame Director-General Bokova emphasizes frequently, and must be also intended for mutual understanding and solidarity among the Member States. Particularly in regards to the Memory of the World, it is necessary for all Member States, as they exercise their due responsibility at UNESCO, to discuss among each other for reforms in order to improve governance and transparency. We hope that Madame Director-General Bokova will continue to provide strong leadership to materialize such reforms.

Mr. President,

All people have the right to enjoy daily lives with happiness and satisfaction through sports.

With this understanding, the Japanese Government established the Japan Sports Agency on October 1st .

In the near future, we will be holding a series of memorable international sporting events such as the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games, and the 2019 Rugby World Cup. We see these events as opportunities for promoting social development all over the world, and we will make further contributions through sports together with UNESCO.

Mr. President,

Upon the occasion of UNESCO's 70th anniversary, the Japanese National Commission for UNESCO is honored to submit a Statement, emphasizing the importance of respecting diversity and valuing the role of UNESCO for realizing a sustainable society. This statement pays respect to UNESCO for having worked so hard towards world peace for the past 70 years. The statement

also proposes that UNESCO should assume the role of an “intellectual leader” in this new era of the international community.

I would like to conclude by expressing my highest expectations for UNESCO’s further development, and its contributions to the international community, under Madame Director-General Bokova’s strong leadership. The Japanese Government is fully committed to making further efforts to promote UNESCO’s activities.

Thank you for your attention.

(End)