



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 Award Ceremony of the 2017 UNESCO-Japan Prize
on Education for Sustainable Development**

39th General Conference

UNESCO, 3 November 2017

Excellency Mr Yoshimasa Hayashi, Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, Japan,

Excellency Ms Kuni Sato, Ambassador and Permanent Delegate of Japan to UNESCO,

Dear Mr Michael Worbs, Chairperson of the Executive Board,

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Dear Jury members,

Dear Laureates,

It is my great pleasure to welcome you to this 3rd edition of the *UNESCO Japan-Prize on Education for Sustainable Development*.

I am delighted to award this Prize together with you, Minister Hayashi.

Your presence here today reflects Japan's pioneering support to Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) – from the launch of a Decade in 2005 that created an irreversible momentum to integrate new values, attitudes and knowledge in school curricula, to the *World Conference* in Nagoya in 2014, a milestone in which I was honoured also to participate.

There, with Japan's support, we launched the *Global Action Programme*, as the official-follow up to the Decade, to accelerate and scale up ESD actions worldwide.

It is in this context that the UNESCO-Japan Prize was established, to showcase and reward outstanding ESD projects.

In 2015, the inclusion of ESD as a target in Sustainable Development Goal 4 of the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* is a tribute to our global advocacy.

This marks strong recognition by the international community that countries need ESD to make the transition to green societies, to translate the *Paris Climate Agreement* into practice.

Our goal is to empower learners to take informed decisions and responsible actions for the future, actions that will be sustainable.

This is what this prize is about.

It is a Prize suited for our times.

Every edition draws an increasing number of nominations – this year, they exceed 100, and I take this opportunity to thank the five distinguished jury members for your continuous support to the Prize.

Our laureates, and all participants, must be seen as ESD champions, whose activities are closely integrated with our programmes.

We establish long-term collaboration with the laureates, inviting them to join *Global Action Programme Partner Networks*, involving them in national and regional events, producing communication materials in local languages to raise the visibility of their projects.

This January, we organized a study trip to Japan in collaboration with the Japanese National Commission for UNESCO, bringing all six laureates together.

This is about empowering positive change through initiatives that are innovative and transformative, through actions that connect all three dimensions of sustainable development -- the economy, society, and the environment -- each working through different angles...

Mesdames et Messieurs,

Parmi les gagnants de cette année, nous trouvons:

Une école -- l'école primaire Sihlengeni du Zimbabwe...

Une entreprise -- l'entreprise sociale *Zikra* de Jordanie...

Une organisation à but non lucratif -- le projet *Hard Rain* du Royaume-Uni.

Vous allez bientôt entendre parler de ces trois projets remarquables dans une courte vidéo.

Ils ont été sélectionnés pour leur potentiel et pour leur capacité à être répliqués et diffusés dans différents contextes et à grande échelle, et je souhaite que cette cérémonie permette d'engager une discussion avec les lauréats pour dupliquer tous ces projets au bénéfice du plus grand nombre.

Chers lauréats,

Je vous félicite pour votre créativité, pour votre engagement et pour votre réussite.

L'UNESCO est à vos côtés et se réjouit de travailler avec vous pour inspirer des changements positifs pour le développement durable.

Je vous remercie.