

Karlis Greiškals

Minister of Education and Science



Born in 1942, Mr. Greiškals holds a Diploma in Sports Education from the Latvian State Institute of Physical Culture, and a certificate from the Business Center "Europa House". From 1966 to 1971 he was a teacher of the Upper-Secondary School. For nine years, he served as a Chairman of the Sports Association "Varpa" Valmiera Regional Board. In 1981 he was subsequently appointed as a Director of the Valmiera Viestura Upper-Secondary School. From 1984 to 1998 he was a Deputy Chairman and Chairman of the Valmiera Regional Council, and Chairman of the Valmiera City Council. He was an initiator and a founder of the regional university college. He is a member of numerous professional and sports institutions and associations. In November 1998, he was elected Member of the Parliament of the Republic of Latvia, and he was a Chairman of the State Administration and self-government

Commission. In 2000, he took up the post of Minister of Education and Science.

Quality of Education for Information Society

Dear Conference Participants! It is a challenge to every country to create the education system that provides everybody with the possibilities of life-long learning. The vanishing borders between the time for studies and the time for work in a human life, as well as the supply of education programmes to inhabitants of all age groups disregarding their social background and gender represents a significant feature of learning society.

The basic theme of this conference "Education for All for Learning to Live Together" implies invitation to act, share experience and start joint creation of the building of future. The aims set in Dakar World Education Forum impose every UNESCO Member State to participate in the creation of this building by forming both national and regional education forums. Latvia has committed itself to organise an EFA sub-regional forum in 2002. Latvia is working now on developing the national action plan as well as on identifying priorities for the discussion on the regional level. The action plan of the Latvian National Commission for UNESCO has been made, where education issues occupy a significant place.

The documents of Dakar Forum put forward harnessing of Internet resources and their use in learning among other strategies for action. This strategy involves: acquisition of new skills for creative common work, cross-cultural links and solution of problems.

To implement this strategy several significant actions have been taken in Latvia: first of all, in 1997 the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Latvia approved the national programme "Informatics", secondly, in 2000 the social and economic programme "e-Latvia" was accepted, thirdly, since 1997 Latvia has been implementing the Education Informatisation Project. Along with the development of information technologies training of education personnel is taking place and curricula have been designed within the project. The state and local governments have invested about 18 million euros from their budgets in school informatisation.

The main aim of education, as our country sees it, is the development of personalities on the basis of value recognition, independent critical thinking and acquisition of practical life-skills for using the knowledge. The integration of values in the education system helps to create educated intellectual and human citizens. Therefore one of the most significant focus in the development of education in Latvia is achievement of sustainable quality of education. The priority tasks defined in the Twenty-first Century Report by the International Commission for Education "Learning the Treasure Within", which was published in Latvian in spring of 2001 are reflected in the Conception of the Development of the Latvian System of Education. I consider that the discussion themes of this conference represent the most important issues of the modern world community. It is important for us to address them, as well as find answers and recommendations for further action. 