

ANNEX XI**Expression of thanks by Ms Cecilia Braslavsky,
Director of the UNESCO International Bureau of Education (IBE)**

Distinguished Ministers,
Heads of Delegation,
Mr Director-General of UNESCO,
Mr Assistant Director-General for Education,
Madam Counsellor of State, Head of the Swiss Delegation,
Representatives of teachers, parents and pupils,
Members of the various intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations,
Dear participants and friends,

On behalf of the Secretariat of the 46th session of the International Conference on Education, and in my capacity as Secretary-General of this Conference, it is with no little emotion that I should like – through you, ladies and gentlemen, – to thank the UNESCO General Conference for the challenge issued to the UNESCO International Bureau of Education in asking us to transform ourselves into a centre specializing in the contents, methods and structures of education and also to organize this 46th session of the International Conference on Education on the theme “Learning to live together”.

I should also like to thank the Director-General of UNESCO for the opportunity he gave me to become Director of the International Bureau of Education, a specialized institute of UNESCO. I should similarly like to thank our Council, presided over by Mr Pieter de Meijer, for its guidance, hard work, professionalism and constant demands for evaluation, which should even become a daily requirement.

Without the commitment of the group responsible for helping in the preparation of the International Conference on Education, which was appointed by the IBE Council before I took up the post of Director and which has worked tremendously hard, sometimes into the early hours of the morning this week, this event would have scarcely been possible. I should like to thank its Chair and all its members, with a particular mention for Jean-Pierre Régnier in a personal capacity, while not forgetting that he works in the French National Commission for UNESCO, who has discharged his duties as Executive Secretary with outstanding dedication.

Without the firm support of the Swiss authorities and many Swiss colleagues, among whom I should like to mention Ms Martine Brunschwig Graf, Minister of Education and Counsellor of State in Geneva, Mr Charles Kleiber, Secretary of State for Science and Research with responsibility for the Federal Office of Education and Science in Berne, and Mr François Nordmann, Ambassador and Head of the Swiss Mission to the United Nations in Geneva, the IBE would not have been able to accomplish in full the mission entrusted to it by the UNESCO General Conference.

I express once again our thanks and gratitude to all the countries and institutions, all the friends and colleagues who – in keeping with the notion of partnership – spared no effort in the preparation of this Conference. My words are addressed to the speakers, organizers, journalists and friends who, in accordance with the programme, all played their part, not hesitating to intervene on occasion to deal with “emergencies”, in an admirable spirit of collaboration and dialogue. All these people supported us by virtue of their commitment, their professionalism and their warm presence. There were even “Mariachis” at the cocktail held in honour of the laureates of the Comenius Medal instituted by the Government of the Czech Republic; they were wholly unscheduled, and this was a fine surprise for the laureates and for the Secretariat.

Without the strong commitment of UNESCO's Assistant Director-General for Education, Mr John Daniel, the integration of this undertaking in the other activities specified in the UNESCO Medium-Term Strategy, the completion of the final stages of the preparatory work and the smooth functioning of this week of work would not have been possible. Many thanks are due to him.

Numerous colleagues in UNESCO's Education Sector and central services, in our Secretariat and in the UNESCO Liaison Office in Geneva have contributed to or helped us in, as the case may be, strengthening bilateral action by organizing additional activities. For instance, they have taken charge of drawing up the list of participants, organizing the distribution of the documents, managing the organization of the rooms, the interpretation services, the press coverage of the events, etc. There has been excellent work – very serious and extremely effective – behind the scenes, all of which has facilitated dialogue on the complex and delicate problems addressed by the Conference. I should like to extend my sincere thanks to all those concerned.

And finally and above all, I should like to thank my colleagues from the UNESCO International Bureau of Education in Geneva. We form a small team, but a team that is increasingly well-knit and enthusiastic. I should have liked to name them one by one, but we do not have the time. On their behalf, I would simply like to single out two silent workers: our Council Secretary and friend, Pierre Luisoni, and also our youngest expert who came as a student, Renato Mariani.

The ICE is drawing to a close. But with all the team that makes up our Organization – and always in a spirit of cooperation and partnership – we are going to pursue the exciting challenge of realizing the objectives of education for all. First formulated in Jomtien and enriched by inputs from various quarters, in particular the reflections of the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-first Century presided over by Jacques Delors and the recommendations of the 45th session of the ICE concerning the teaching profession, these objectives were the subject of a renewed commitment at the Dakar Forum last year. They have also been central to the dialogue at this 46th session of the ICE on “Education for All for Learning to Live Together: Contents and Learning Strategies – problems and solutions”.

Once again, many thanks to you all.