

## Opening Remarks

By the Governor of Aichi Prefecture

Her Royal Highness Princess Lalla Hasnaa of Morocco, Her Excellency Ms. Irina Bokova, Director-General of UNESCO, ministers of UNESCO member states, and all conference participants, welcome to Aichi-Nagoya.

In the presence of Their Imperial Highnesses the Crown Prince and Crown Princess, it is a great honor to host the UNESCO World Conference on Education for Sustainable Development here in Aichi-Nagoya.

In 2005, we held a World Exposition on the theme of “Nature’s Wisdom” in the very year that the UN Decade of ESD started. For the first time in the history of world expositions, it was themed on the environment, and sent out a message to the rest of the world about how human beings should live in harmony with nature. In 2010, CBD-COP10 was held here in this same venue, and the “Aichi Biodiversity Targets” were adopted as a global roadmap for preserving biodiversity from 2010 to 2020.

To pass on these accomplishments to the future and achieve a sustainable society, we announced the invitation to this conference in 2011, and since then a great many people have contributed to the preparations.

ESD is important not only for solving global issues, but also building local communities, so the whole region is involved in ESD. In particular, we have focused on nurturing the people who will shoulder the next generation by expanding

UNESCO Associated Schools. These efforts in Aichi-Nagoya deserve much attention.

Aichi-Nagoya has the largest accumulation of industries in Japan, especially in the automotive and aerospace industries. The region also has a thriving agricultural industry, and is the largest producer of flowers in Japan. Today, we greeted you all with flowers grown here.

This area is also known as the birthplace of *Nobunaga*, *Hideyoshi*, and *Ieyasu*, the three Samurai heroes who unified Japan in the 16th century, and has many historic sites such as Nagoya Castle, National Treasure Inuyama Castle, as well as traditional cultures such as *dashi* festival floats and *karakuri* mechanical puppets.

Introductions to the attractions of Aichi-Nagoya are on display in the Event Hall. In addition, we have planned excursions so that you can enjoy the attractions for yourselves. Also, a welcome reception will be held at this congress center this evening. I hope you will enjoy our hospitality and your stay with us here.

To conclude, I would like to express my deep appreciation to all the representatives from UNESCO and the Japanese government, who put so much time and effort into preparing for this conference. In closing, I offer my sincere wishes for the success of the conference and for the further progress of ESD in the future.

Thank you very much.