

Message from Mr. Qian Tang, Assistant Director-General for Education, UNESCO

On the occasion of the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Myochikai,  
the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Arigatou Foundation,  
and the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Global Network of Religions for Children

It is a great pleasure and honour for me to address you on the occasion of the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Myochikai, the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Arigatou Foundation and the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Global Network of Religions for Children. Allow me first to express my sincere appreciation for UNESCO's fruitful cooperation with these two organizations.

UNESCO's primary objective is to build the defenses of peace in the minds of men and women. It aims to create the conditions for dialogue and cooperation among civilizations, cultures and peoples, based on respect for commonly-shared values. The United Nations' International Year for the Rapprochement of Cultures (2010), led by UNESCO, reiterates this shared aim to advance mutual knowledge and understanding between the peoples of the world.

Education has a key role to play in addressing challenges such as poverty, gender inequality, conflict, discrimination, and exclusion. Indeed, through education, future generations can acquire the knowledge, values, attitudes, behaviors and skills to create a more peaceful and just world.

As the United Nations' lead agency on education, UNESCO has therefore has been at the forefront of activities that aim to instill human rights values and principles through education. In this regard, it has been actively engaged in promoting a rights-based approach to learning, in order to ensure that every child receives a quality education-that is to say, an education that respects and promotes her or his right to dignity and optimum development. Ethics education is an essential part of these efforts. This is why UNESCO produced the "Learning to Live Together" Manual for teachers and educators together with the Arigatou Foundation, the United Nations Children's Fund and the Global Network of Religions for Children. This manual, which helps educators to support young people to engage as active partners in peace-building processes and sustainable development efforts, has been widely disseminated, including through UNESCO's Associated Schools Project Network and

non-governmental organizations.

Let me conclude by emphasizing the importance of education as a mechanism for peace. I hope that we will continue to work together to reach out to our children and youth so that they can become effective intercultural and global citizens, who can contribute to building sustainable peace in the minds of people.