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UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL,
SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION

Address
by
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Scientific and Cultural Organization
(UNESCO)

at the opening session of the International Conference
on Culture of Peace and Governance

Maputo (Mozambique), 1 September 1997

Mr President,
President of the National Assembly,
Ministers,
Representatives of the diplomatic corps,
President of the National Commission for UNESCO,
Friends and Colleagues,
Ladies and Gentlemen.

"We the peoples of the United Nations determined to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war". As you know, this is how the United Nations' Charter starts. UNESCO, as the intellectual arm of the United Nations system has many tasks but only one mission: to build the defences of peace in the minds of men and women. Without peace, there is no possibility of democracy and good governance, for without peace the voice of the people cannot be represented. Only when we are able to overcome violence will we be able to live together in the richness of our diversity and the strength of our unity.

It is therefore a great honour and pleasure to be with you here today for the opening session of this International Conference on Culture of Peace and Governance. I am especially delighted that this important event brings together such a considerable group of participants from Mozambique as well as a large number from the international community. This is my second official visit to Mozambique. I recall well my first visit here in 1988 and the profound transformations that had been achieved. I therefore particularly welcome the opportunity to begin this visit by attending the opening session of a meeting on such a vital topic. It is an event which represents the culmination of the work jointly undertaken by the Government of Mozambique and UNESCO, following discussions with President Joaquim Chissano of Mozambique and his colleagues and advisors. President Chissano's commitment to the promotion of a culture of peace has ensured that it infuses all facets of policy, ever since the implementation of the UNESCO-sponsored Culture of Peace Programme established here in 1994. I would like to pay tribute to the far-sightedness and commitment of president Chissano in favour of peace, democracy and development.

Moving from a culture of war to a culture of peace is an impossible task if we, as individuals, in our everyday behaviour, do not make it our responsibility to uphold the basic principles of freedom, justice and democracy, tolerance and solidarity and the respect for all human rights - the foundations upon which a culture of peace are laid. Through efforts like yours, and similar ones being undertaken in Latin America and elsewhere, we can, as citizens of this planet, create the atmosphere necessary for the attainment of the goal of UNESCO and the United Nations System as a whole - to save future generations from the scourge of war by creating peace first and foremost in the minds of men and women.

Mozambique is now looked to as a reference in peace-building and the construction of democracy. However a culture of peace is such that it is not dependent on the role of one individual or one country alone. It needs a concerted effort by all on the inter- and intra-national levels and requires, as its essential ingredient, the comprehensive consultation, collaboration and decision-making of **all** actors involved on **all** sides of **all** issues concerning states coming out of conflict. People emerging from conflict must be brought to work together, for and with each other, in pursuance of the objectives of peace and security for all. The efforts of the Mozambican people demonstrate how a united effort can work within one country. This example must now be taken up by others for the development of sustainable and durable peace in the world.

I am convinced this Conference will contribute to reflection on sustainable peace and governance through education for peace. It will examine the application of democratic principles in day-to-day governance and national reconstruction. In 1989, the General Conference of UNESCO decided to establish the programme Priority Africa, because we thought - and think - that Africa is more a solution than a problem and that in the wisdom of Africa we can find many solutions to the challenges that we face. Soon the programme "Priority Africa" was in **all** the programme activities of UNESCO. In 1993 we had "Audience Africa" because we wanted to know exactly what Africans themselves want. UNESCO is guided by the mission established in our Constitution and in the United Nations' Charter, guided by the decisions of the General Conference. Now we have a strategy which enables UNESCO to react rapidly. The actors are the countries themselves. We institutions are only animators. UNESCO is not a technical agency - it embodies an ideal of sharing and provides points of reference.

In moving into the new millennium, we need farsightedness, vision - that is why we wanted to know how Africans wanted to implement these ethical principles which guide our action. Graca Machel was elected President of Audience Africa whose final report taught me a lot. It is a report which all countries - and not only those in Africa - should read. I shall do my best to ensure its recommendations are implemented. In the past, you have been and today you are still subject to external models of administration, of management, of culture, education and business. These models are imposed or at least are not your own vision of how to act. Therefore today, independence must also mean deciding according to one's own vision and reflection. This is what education brings. Education is much more than instruction; education means personal sovereignty; it means we are the owners of ourselves and act according to our own thoughts.

Let me say once more that education for peace is essential for establishing a culture of peace. Yet we cannot have sustainable peace if we do not also have sustainable development. Sustainable development requires justice, the appropriate sharing of natural, technical and financial resources, and freedom of expression. Therefore we have interactive ingredients: peace, democracy and development. To make them effective at national and international levels is one of the most important challenges today for governance. Governance must take into account national and international challenges. One cannot solve problems at national level which are by their very nature transnational. Recognition of these different levels is to have not only the possibility of adjustment but also of anticipation - this is fundamental for governance. Anticipation is absolutely essential for good governance.

UNESCO is a watchtower on issues related to social and natural sciences. Vital policy decisions must be based on the most rigorous and up-to-date knowledge, not on opinion polls; they must be based on science, not on emotions. As Director-General of UNESCO, I always insist that higher education and research are vital for developing countries which need this capacity of forecasting even more than others. It is true that if you carry out prevention no one will commend you because health, peace and normal life do not attract media attention. We must be able to draw these intangibles from daily life in order to mobilize people and show them that we can avoid war, suffering and want, and that we can establish peace and tolerance. As a biochemist specializing in the brain I know that when you have prevented a disease no one will come to thank you. We thank the surgeon because we can see what he has done. Yet prevention is primordial. Prevention is the main pillar of good governance.

An important aspect of good governance at the level of national parliaments is their role in ensuring continuity. There are matters like education and science policies where we should not modify the main lines of policy each and every time there is a change of government. There are long-term issues at stake which are issues of State, whose continuity must be assured by parliaments. Parliaments also have an important role to play in embodying in law the most important resolutions of United Nations conferences where the follow-up is what matters most. It is the parliaments which can ensure this follow-up and can implement United Nations recommendations through a legal framework.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

What counts finally is the endogenous development of each man and woman, of each country. You must have your own development and be able to exploit your own resources. Otherwise

the only thing which you have in the developing world is debt. The debt of the poorest nations must now be reconsidered or you will not be able to benefit from your rich natural resources. We cannot pay the price of peace and the price of war at the same time. We must choose peace if we want schools, universities, life-long learning, new technology for everyone, health and water. Let us take the example of water. Oil is always in the news but water is an even more essential question. Only a tiny proportion of the world's water is fresh water and a lot of it is polluted. We must be able to channel water as we channel oil. We must be prepared to pay the price that this requires.

As the century ends, we must now fully honour the promise made in 1945. All parliaments of the world, all people and parties should say: violence has failed. We are ending the century with advanced technology but also with very advanced forms of rapid destruction. It has been a century of war, of suffering, of violation of human rights and it is still so today. The coming generations must be allowed to enjoy life in a culture of peace and dialogue. We have to be convinced that the mission of UNESCO is feasible. Only by fulfilling that mission, by building peace in the minds of men and women, will we prevent future generations from knowing the horror of war.