



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
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Organisation  
des Nations Unies  
pour l'éducation,  
la science et la culture

Organización  
de las Naciones Unidas  
para la Educación,  
la Ciencia y la Cultura

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Объединенных Наций по  
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منظمة الأمم المتحدة  
للتربية والعلم والثقافة

联合国教育、  
科学及文化组织

**Address by Mr Koïchiro Matsuura, Director-General of UNESCO,  
on the occasion of the designation  
of Jacqueline Silva as UNESCO Champion for Sport**

**UNESCO, 1 September 2009**

Mr Chairman of the Executive Board,

Ms Jacqueline Silva,

Mr João Carlos de Souza-Gomes, Ambassador, Permanent Delegate of Brazil  
to UNESCO,

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you all to UNESCO Headquarters to celebrate the designation of the world-famous volleyball player, Jacqueline Silva, as UNESCO Champion for Sport.

In this capacity, Ms Silva will join other truly outstanding sports personalities, such as legendary football player Pelé, Formula One World Champion Michael Schumacher, Olympic Judo Champion David Douillet and the renowned hockey player, Olympic and World Champion Viatcheslav Fetisov.

The sports career of Ms Silva has been a symbol of hard work and perseverance, and an inspiration for millions of women and young people worldwide. Her outstanding performances have been crowned with the highest titles, including that of Olympic Champion for beach volleyball in Atlanta in 1996.

In designating Ms Silva as a UNESCO Champion for Sport, our Organization pays tribute not only to a brilliant athlete, but also to a woman who over the years has constantly sought to use her talents and influence to improve the situation of others.

I wish to make special mention of the activities that Ms Silva has undertaken within the framework of the Instituto Jackie Silva, which aims to promote sports and social interaction among vulnerable and disadvantaged youth in Rio de Janeiro.

Today, the Instituto Jackie Silva is active, through its volleyball units, in 49 different centres across the state of Rio de Janeiro, reaching around 6,000 children between the ages of 8 and 16. As well as sports training, the institute offers workshops, counselling and lectures on the prevention of HIV/AIDS, early pregnancy and drug abuse to youngsters at-risk.

UNESCO is an international organization with a mandate to promote peace and development through our fields of competence: education, the natural and human sciences, culture and communication. We are especially committed to promoting the values of physical education and sports with a view to building a better future for younger generations. I know that this is a concern that is close to your heart too, Ms Silva. All your endeavours prove that you are a true supporter of UNESCO's aims and ideals. I hope that in your capacity as UNESCO Champion for Sport you will continue to be a model for the young generation, and share with them our common values.

In particular, UNESCO looks forward to working with you in promoting inclusive education and sport for peace and development.

In the field of inclusive education, Ms Silva will contribute to the programme "learn to live together", which aims to bridge social and racial divides within Brazilian urban centres, notably in Rio de Janeiro.

Ms Silva will also undertake visits to the field and attend events, particularly in Lusophone countries, in order to foster South-South cooperation in sports as an effective means of advancing social development and inclusive education.

In the area of sport for peace and development, Ms Silva will promote the values of sport and physical education, especially through the media.

Physical education and sports form an essential part of a quality education, contributing to both a child's mental and physical development. The practice of

sports can also help foster among youth a spirit of fair play, integrity and excellence.

Ms Silva will use her professional background and her influence as a role model for youth in order to support fair play and anti-doping campaigns and advocate the importance of physical education among children and young people. She will also lend her support to other activities undertaken by UNESCO in Brazil and other countries in these important fields.

Dear Ms Silva,

It is therefore my great pleasure to confer on you the title of UNESCO Champion for Sport.

I congratulate you on joining the ranks of UNESCO's Champions for Sport and wish you every success in your new mission.