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Organización  
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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 nomination of Professor Paul Ahyi  
as UNESCO Artist for Peace**

**UNESCO, 10 September 2009**

Mr Rector, Chancellor of the Universities of Togo and  
Representative of Togo on the Executive Board,  
Mr Ambassador, Permanent Delegate of Togo to UNESCO,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

I am very pleased to hold this ceremony at UNESCO Headquarters on the occasion  
of the designation of Professor Paul Ahyi as UNESCO Artist for Peace.

Exceptionally, this ceremony has been organized by videoconference so that, even  
at a distance, we may have the pleasure of seeing and hearing Paul Ahyi.

Professor, you unfortunately could not travel to Paris on account of an accident a  
few months ago, but I would like to take this opportunity to wish you a quick  
recovery and to address warm words of welcome to your family here today.

I also welcome Rector Johnston, and the Ambassador of Togo to UNESCO for  
honouring us with their friendly presence.

Ladies and gentlemen,

We are extremely honoured that Paul Ahyi has accepted to become a UNESCO  
Artist for Peace.

The pictorial and sculptural works of Paul Ahyi, a graduate of the Ecole Nationale  
Supérieure des Beaux-arts in Paris, are known in Africa and around the world. Many  
of them have been exhibited in West Africa, in New York and Paris, at the United  
Nations, in Korea, China, Canada, Italy and Japan.

Above all, a message of peace and understanding among peoples runs through all of his work. Believing in the virtues of cultural diversity as a factor for social cohesion and dialogue, he has worked for a better understanding and the worldwide resonance of African culture.

His vision as an artist has also been nourished by his rich experience as a teacher, which has enabled him to explain and to transmit his learning, his sense of creativity and his knowledge of art to younger generations.

I thus believe that he will play a decisive role together with UNESCO in the promotion of our shared ideals – diversity, tolerance and intercultural dialogue – in Africa and around the world.

As a UNESCO Artist for Peace, Professor Paul Ahyi will join distinguished artists, such as the painter and sculptor Malangatana of Mozambique, Prince Twins Seven-Seven of Nigeria, the Philippine Madrigal Singers, the Cameroonian musician Manu Dibango, the Brazilian singer Gilberto Gil and many other celebrities.

I have no doubt that, in joining such a community of artists and intellectuals, Paul Ahyi will know how to employ his fame and influence to promote UNESCO's ideals.

I now have great pleasure in designating Professor Paul Ahyi UNESCO Artist for Peace and presenting him with this diploma by way of his son.

I wish him every success in his new mission and thank him for joining forces with UNESCO.

I thank you for your attention.