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Organización
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Организация
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вопросам образования,
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منظمة الأمم المتحدة
للتربية والعلم والثقافة

联合国教育、
科学及文化组织

Address by Irina Bokova,

Director-General of UNESCO

**on the occasion of the PhosAgro/UNESCO/IUPAC Award-Giving Ceremony
(Grants for research projects proposed by young scientists in green
chemistry)**

St Petersburg, 2 June 2017

Dr Andrey Guryev, Chief Executive Officer of *PhosAgro*,

Professor Natalia Tarasova, President of the *International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry*,

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am honoured to participate in this Award Ceremony for the *PhosAgro/UNESCO/IUPAC Partnership in Green Chemistry for Life*.

This takes place in the framework of the *St Petersburg International Economic Forum*, a key event on the global calendar... and I must say it is always a special pleasure to return to St Petersburg.

Russia is, of course, a country of renowned chemists... women and men who have changed the way we see the world... starting with Mikhail Lomonosov... starting with Dmitri Mendeleev, and UNESCO will celebrate the 150th anniversary of his periodic table in 2019.

Speaking of Mikhail Lomonosov, the great Alexander Pushkin wrote:

“Combining great will-power and remarkable strength of perception, Lomonosov embraced all the branches of learning. A historian, mechanic, chemist, physicist, astronomer, geographer, historian, philologist, artist and poet, he experienced it all and perceived it all ...”

I believe this same spirit guides the *St Petersburg International Economic Forum* as well as the partnership that brings us together today... policy makers, private sector leaders, experts from civil society and young scientists... all joining forces for innovation, to craft a better future for all.

I wish to thank *PhosAgro* and the *International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry* for this partnership, which was born from the 2011 *International Year of Chemistry*.

The *International Year of Chemistry* was a global celebration of the contributions of chemistry to the progress of all societies -- it also created a long-term platform for creating and sharing knowledge, for mobilising new sources of innovation.

I see our partnership as an example of the 'soft power' the world needs today.

UNESCO, a global private sector company and an international non-governmental organization are working hand-in-hand to support more just, sustainable and effective chemistry-based solutions to the challenges all societies face today.

We need chemistry to move forward the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*.

We need chemistry to eradicate poverty.

We need chemistry to bolster health.

We need chemistry to mitigate the impacts of climate change.

In a word, we need chemistry for human rights and dignity, to leave no one behind.

Not just any chemistry...

We need green chemistry... sustainable chemistry... chemistry that respects the boundaries of the planet... chemistry that is inclusive, that works for the benefit of all...

We need chemistry at the cutting-edge of innovation, for alternative energy, for food security, for sustainable water management, to protect human health and the environment.

This calls for innovation at every level... in the design and creation of products... in all associated processes.

This is why our partnership is so important, to support the creativity and innovation of young scientists, guided by the Principles of Green Chemistry.

Over the last four years, the *PhosAgro/UNESCO/IUPAC Partnership* has spotlighted over 480 ground-breaking projects across the world -- we have gathered now to support new projects, each embodying the promise of excellence, each driven by the Principles of Green Chemistry.

In this spirit, I wish to thank the members of the *PhosAgro/UNESCO/IUPAC International Jury for Green Chemistry* for sharing their expertise.

Allow me to express special gratitude to Dr Andrey Guryev for the leadership he brings to strengthening cooperation between *PhosAgro* and UNESCO -- I am confident this will continue to go from strength to strength.

I wish also to thank Professor Tarasova, President of the *International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry* and Bureau Member of the *International Jury for Green Chemistry*.

For many years now, IUPAC has been a champion partner of UNESCO's action in the sciences, for green chemistry, for which I am deeply grateful.

The scientist Carl Sagan once said:

"Somewhere, something incredible is waiting to be known."

In this spirit, I call on all young scientists today to be bold, to go out and discover something incredible for us all to know, to shape a better future for humanity, for the planet.

This is UNESCO's message -- this is our shared message today.

Thank you.