



THE PRESIDENT  
OF THE  
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

10 November 2016

Excellency,

In 2015, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was unanimously adopted by Member States of the United Nations. Taken with the Paris Climate Change Agreement, which came into force on 4 November, the community of nations now has in place a comprehensive plan to achieve a sustainable future for humankind on this planet.

As President of the General Assembly's 71st Session, I have made the implementation of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda the central focus of the session. Here at the Office of the President of the General Assembly we are aiming to achieve momentum for all 17 of the Goals and are devoting ourselves to the task.

Since today's youth will be the inheritors of the success or failure of the Sustainable Development Goals, their ownership and commitment to the Goals will be critical to success. For this to be so, they must be taught to embrace the 17 Goals as fundamental to their future well-being and sustainability.

In pursuit of this high purpose, I am writing to you and every Head of Government of the Member States of the United Nations, with the request that national efforts are made to educate young people on the vital importance of the Sustainable Development Goals. If every school curriculum in the world incorporates the Sustainable Development Goals, every school teaches them, and every young person on the planet is made aware of them as rights and responsibilities, the world will stand a very good chance of attaining the Goals by 2030.

I am pleased to advise, Excellency, that in support of the policies that your government may decide on the matter, tools are already available to help support SDG learning, such as those developed by UNICEF, UNESCO, the Global Partnership for Education and the "World's Largest Lesson".

This letter is written to you in the spirit of universality in which the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda was forged. It is also written from the perspective of a loving grandfather who cares deeply whether post-2030 conditions will allow for a sustainable way of life for humankind on Planet Earth. It is written, in the conviction that determined implementation of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals by the youth of today and adults of tomorrow, will secure that future for humanity.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Peter Thomson

To All Heads of Government of the Member States  
of the United Nations



To the Ministers of Education of Member States  
and Associate Member States of UNESCO

Ref.: DG/1/16/9454

18 JAN 2017

Dear Minister,

In September 2015, the United Nations General Assembly committed to 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), to be implemented by 2030. More than one year after, it is encouraging to see with how much enthusiasm and dedication individuals, organizations and governmental entities around the world have started to implement the 2030 Agenda. Together with the Paris Climate Agreement, this Agenda charts a path for a sustainable future for people and planet. To move forward, governments and other stakeholders expect strong support from the United Nations.

In order to respond to these expectations, the President of the 71<sup>st</sup> session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), Mr Peter Thomson, has made the implementation of the SDGs a central focus, with a call for special attention to the mobilization and education of people, especially children and youth. The challenge is to keep not only governments but people all over the world mobilized to create a truly 'universal push' to implement these agendas.

UNESCO and UNICEF strongly support this call. In this regard, we would like to draw your attention to the enclosed letter sent by the UNGA President to all Heads of State and Government on 10 November last. The letter reflects the importance of education as a basic prerequisite and driver for the implementation of all SDGs, by urging that national efforts be made to educate children and young people on their vital importance. It pledges support from the United Nations system, and to this end, draws attention to tools already available for SDG learning.

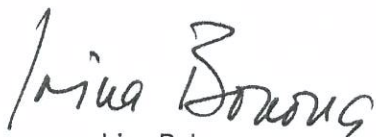
As the President affirms, "if every school curriculum in the world incorporates the Sustainable Development Goals, every school teaches them, and every young person on the planet is made aware of them as rights and responsibilities, the world will stand a very good chance of attaining the Goals by 2030."

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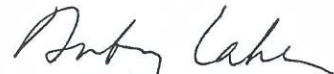
UNESCO and UNICEF are already supporting the learning and teaching of the SDGs through a number of initiatives. For example, UNICEF and UNESCO are both key partners on the *World's Largest Lesson*, a global initiative we had previously been in touch with you on. The World's Largest Lesson introduces the SDGs to the classroom through easy to use lesson plans, videos, comics and other creative content, developed with the flexibility to be used within existing school curricula and subject areas. UNESCO is also further supporting SDG learning through its *Education for Sustainable Development (ESD)* and *Global Citizenship Education (GCED)* programmes, both with the overall aim to develop cross-cutting competencies that enable learners to contribute to achieving the SDGs. Further, UNESCO and UNICEF advocate for child and human rights education, promote gender-sensitive curricula and support teacher training initiatives worldwide.

Allow us to seize this occasion to call on your support for the initiative of the President of UNGA's 71<sup>st</sup> session, and to urge you to ensure that learning about the SDGs is integrated into schools across all countries. UNESCO and UNICEF stand ready to support you in this endeavour.

Yours sincerely,



Irina Bokova  
Director-General



Anthony Lake  
Executive Director

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