

Opening Address

Hideki Niwa, The State Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, Japan

Hideki Niwa

We are truly grateful to all of you for taking time off your busy schedule to attend the Japan Education Forum for SDGs. We are also privileged to welcome today, upon invitation by the Government of Japan, Dr. Hang Chuon Naron, Minister of Education, Youth and Sport of the Kingdom of Cambodia. Your Excellency, we are truly grateful for you taking time out of your busy schedule to give the keynote lecture. We also have the Parliamentary Vice-Minister from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan, as well.

This forum was held first in 2004, gathering stakeholders involved in education support to address international education in a frank and open exchange. This year is the 15th. Starting from the 14th one, last year, because the General Assembly of the UN adopted the SDGs since September 2015, we have recreated the forum as 'JEF for SDGs,' that is the Japan Education Forum for SDGs. It was born a new.

SDGs is a new common agenda for all of us, and within that context, the role of this forum will increase in importance. There are a lot of expectations for its results as well, outcome as well. In that situation, going forward in order to achieve sustainable society, we will promote the dialog, interactions by stakeholders.

At MEXT as well, with the goal of achieving the SDGs in the field of education and science and technology, proactive approaches, proactive initiatives will be taken, especially in the education. Filled ESD, educational ESD was implemented, promoted to contribute to the achievement of SDGs. For example, in the new course design, in order for children to become enablers of a sustainable society, new qualities and competencies must be achieved and that principle of designing education to enable such children has been implemented. More than 1000 UNESCO schools are available in Japan, providing an outlet for ESD and also to implement ESD in schools.

Schools and education committees will work together with the community to implement ESD. ESD will not only help to achieve number 4 of SDG, but all seven SDG goals. MEXT will continue to nurture talent who will enable a sustainable society and to contribute to the achievement of SDGs.

Today's topic is Quality of Education for SDGs and its challenges and realities of education policies. Goal 4 of SDGs is about quality education for all. We need to think what it means, and that is important. Today, as we move towards the common goal of SDGs through active discussion, the expectations from this forum is to enhance the quality of education, and eventually to contribute to the achievement of SDGs.

Last but not least, I would like to thank all of the stakeholders, organizers who have made this possible, and hopefully that this forum will become meaningful for all of you.

With that, I would like to end my remarks. I wish you the best on this forum. Thank you.