

WEBCAST OF CLOSING SESSION 4 pm ET, March 17, 2011

Unofficial Summary Translations from Brazilian Portuguese, Japanese, and Mandarin Chinese into English¹

Closing Remarks of the Brazilian Delegation

- First, we'd like to start by making reference to Brazil's participation with the International Labor Organization (ILO) in the area of the teaching profession. I think that that the ILO report is a significant document for the teaching profession around the world.
- Second, while we think we have "quality education" as an objective, we've also discussed here the question: Exactly what IS the concept of "quality education?"
- We'd like to note two lessons we've taken away from our discussions:
 - There are a variety of challenges facing each of our countries, even among those countries that have achieved relative success. The contexts and dimensions vary, but we all face challenges related to the teaching profession.
 - There is an awareness of the importance of expanding social participation. This has been mentioned a lot to one extent or another. Such social participation largely involves teacher unions, but also includes parents and students, etc. We think Slovenia gave a great example of social participation and of the involvement of their unions in education reform.
- We'd like to propose two tasks that we can work toward:
 - Work toward policies to increase the status of our educational professionals, e.g. salary, pre-service and in-service training and career paths/advancement. We use the term "education professionals" in Brazil because it encompasses not just teachers but all professionals involved in education.
 - Continue to develop instruments to recruit qualified teachers. That can be particularly difficult within a three-level federalized system.

Closing Remarks of the Japanese Delegation

- In meetings of the Council on Education at MEXT, we are currently deliberating how we should recruit and prepare superior teachers who are the center of all schooling.
- After listening to each country's discussion about how to improve education, we realize that we need to place emphasis on the importance of both the quality and the quantity of teachers in schools. We'd like to improve the quality and the quantity of teachers by listening carefully to the opinions of teachers in the classroom about how policy related to preparation, recruitment, research and evaluation of teachers should be developed.
- As seen in the reports of OECD, it is also important that we move forward using research based on solid data.
- As for the recent earthquake in Japan, I would like to extend our sincere gratitude to Secretary Duncan and many of you who have sent heartfelt condolences. Also, we've heard that many U.S. schools and U.S. students are very worried and concerned about our students and schools that were devastated by the earthquake and that they are wishing us the best and sending their hopes for a speedy recovery. As a nation, we are working hard to recover, rebuild and reopen all our schools as soon as possible. Thank you very much.
- Everyone talked about the importance of partnerships and we strongly believe that partnerships are also important for us to forward with quality reforms.

¹ During the Summit, simultaneous translation was provided. However, it was not possible to incorporate the English translation into the audio recording for the webcast. This unofficial, summary translation has been provided to share with viewers the key points made in the foreign languages spoken.

Closing Remarks of the Chinese Delegation

- The Chinese delegation organized their remarks in the closing session into four areas. They spent the largest amount of time discussing the first area: reform.
- First, reform is a never-ending process and requires the involvement and support of teachers to make it successful. China is working to improve teacher qualifications and the management of teachers at all levels by instituting a five year evaluation cycle: every five years, teachers will be evaluated to see if they are still qualified to be in the classroom.
- Second, China is working to improve education policy. China is a huge country and there is great disparity in the standard of education between regions, particularly the middle and western regions, as well as between urban and rural areas. They are working to unify the system through education policy and bring up the standard of education in all regions and areas.
- Third, in Chinese schools, they would like to provide more space for school principals and teachers to make improvements. Currently, the school principal has some responsibility for improvement, but that could be increased and shared with teachers.
- Forth, China would like to enhance cooperation on many levels. This includes increased cooperation between teachers and parents, students, principals and government. It also includes establishing greater cooperation between the Chinese government and other countries.