



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

Organisation
des Nations Unies
pour l'éducation,
la science et la culture

Organización
de las Naciones Unidas
para la Educación,
la Ciencia y la Cultura

Организация
Объединенных Наций по
вопросам образования,
науки и культуры

منظمة الأمم المتحدة
للتربية والعلم والثقافة

联合国教育、
科学及文化组织

**Address by Mr Getachew Engida,
Deputy Director-General, UNESCO
on the occasion of the farewell reception of
H.E Mr Tilak Ranaviraja,**

**Ambassador of Sri Lanka to France, Portugal and Spain, Permanent
Delegate to UNESCO.**

Paris, 22 August 2017

Dear Ambassador Ranaviraja,

Thank you for your kind invitation for this friendly and cordial meeting.

During your term as Permanent Delegate to UNESCO, which started in October 2015, the cooperation between UNESCO and Sri Lanka was marked by important developments and I would like to underline your exceptional personal contribution to this cooperation.

First of all, Sri Lanka was elected at 38th session of the General Conference as a Member of the Executive Board for the term 2015-2019.

And just after that, another most important event took place: on 29 November 2015, on the eve of the Conference of Parties (COP 21) to the United Nations Convention on Climate Change in Paris, we received here at Headquarters, His Excellency Mr Maithripala Sirisena, President of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka.

We were particularly encouraged by his statement stressing that Sri Lanka intends to actively engage in shaping and advancing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as well as the UN 2015 agenda in education for sustainable development.

Following his visit, UNESCO/Sri Lanka Co-sponsored Fellowships Programme 2017-2018 was announced during last June.

We are glad to know that the Government of Sri Lanka is offering two fellowships for the academic year 2017-2018 to selected students from Kenya and

Saint Kitts and Nevis to undertake undergraduate study in Sri Lanka in the field of Agricultural Technology and Management, and Environmental Conservation and Management for a duration of three or four years.

Today, we are here all together, in order to congratulate you on the successful conclusion of your term of office and to pay tribute to your personal contribution to the cooperation between Sri Lanka and UNESCO.

Dear Ambassador,

As you remember, on 2 June 2016, the DG received Mr Mangala Samaraweera, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Sri Lanka.

During this meeting, the Minister underscored that the Government attached great importance to working closely with UNESCO, mentioning in particular the development of curricula and the promotion of “Unity in Diversity” in Sri Lanka.

By expressing UNESCO's gratitude to your work for Organization over the past 2 years, I would like to underscore today our "Diversity in Unity",

because even if you are going to be away from us, we all continue to work for the common ideals of the United Nations in the interest of peace.

Our best wishes go also to your family, your spouse and daughter.

Thank you !