



From left to right:
Ms Akiko Obuchi,
Mrs Chizuko Obuchi,
and Mr Koïchiro Matsuura
Director-General of UNESCO,
Paris, 23 April 2004.

To honour the memory of Keizo Obuchi, former Prime Minister of Japan, the Director-General of UNESCO, Koïchiro Matsuura, paid tribute, on Friday 23 April 2004 at UNESCO Headquarters, to the former Prime Minister of Japan, the late Keizo Obuchi, on the occasion of the third anniversary of the implementation of the “UNESCO / Keizo Obuchi Research Fellowships Programme”.

The ceremony took place in presence of Mrs Takako Matsuura, Mrs Chizuko Obuchi, the widow of the former Prime Minister and their daughter Akiko Obuchi.



From left to right: Ms Akiko Obuchi, Mrs Chizuko Obuchi, Mr Koïchiro Matsuura, and Mrs Takako Matsuura.

To date, the total contribution to UNESCO in the form of Funds-in-Trust from the Japanese Government amounts to US\$791,680, covering two phases of the Programme (2001-2002 cycle and 2003-2004 cycle), enabling UNESCO to award fellowships to 60 research fellows from 43 countries during the period 2001-2003. Twenty fellows for 2004 have been chosen by the selection committee and endorsed by Mr Matsuura himself and have recently begun their research.



Mr Koïchiro Matsuura, Director-General of UNESCO

During the ceremony, Mr Matsuura declared:

“Keizo Obuchi had a firm belief that the key to success in every country is to consolidate the capacity-building of the nation’s human resources, especially by investing resources in the younger generation, since the future will be borne by them. Sharing this belief I created the UNESCO/Keizo Obuchi Research Fellowships Programme in his honour.

With the generous support of the Japanese Government, we have been able to award 20 fellowships a year since 2001 to deserving candidates from developing countries and countries in transition.”



From left to right: Mrs Takako Matsuura, Mr Koïchiro Matsuura, Ms Igbal Salah and Mrs Chizuko Obuchi



From left to right: Mrs Takako Matsuura, Mr Koïchiro Matsuura, Mr Mikhail Ivanov, Mrs Chizuko Obuchi and Ms Akiko Obuchi

Two fellows of the 2003 programme, both studying in Germany in April 2004, Ms Igbal Salah Mohammed Ali, of Sudan, and Mr Mikhail V. Ivanov, of the Kyrgyz Republic, were invited to participate in the ceremony and expressed their gratitude to the Keizo Obuchi Fellowships Programme.

Ms Igbal Salah Mohammed Ali

Born on 3 October 1970, Omdurman, Sudan

Last degree obtained:

M.Sc in Hydrology at the National University of Ireland, Galway

Scholarly work and publications:

Application and Modification of the Probability Distributed Soil Moisture Storage Capacity Model (PDM):
Master's Thesis, National University Ireland, Galway, Ireland, 1998.

Field of Research studies:
Environment

Research on:
The application of remote sensing techniques and numerical models management of the Nile River ecosystem

Research undertaken:
from November 2003 to May 2004

Mr. Mikhail V. Ivanov

Born on 17 June 1980, Kyrgyz Republic

Last degree obtained:

Diploma on International Relations (with Honours) at the Kyrgyz-Russian Slavic University, Faculty of International Relations

Scholarly work and publications:

10 years independence of the Kyrgyz Republic: achievements and prospects. In collected articles "Kyrgyzstan: 10 years of independence. Political analyses." (p. 13-15), Bishkek, 2002.

Psychology of modern electorate. In collected articles "Politics through the prism of psychology", (p. 21-23), Bishkek, 2002.

Field of Research studies:
Peaceful Conflict Resolution

Research on:
The Problem of New Security Challenges and Possibility of Conflict Resolution and Prevention in the Central Asia region

Research undertaken:
from November 2003 to May 2004

Statement by Mrs Igbal Salah Mohamad Ali

“It is well known that UNESCO plays a major role in the developing countries through the different programs carried out under its auspices which enhance the degree of awareness of the changeable situations in our world. I am very glad to participate in this special event to honour the memory of former Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi who made significant contributions in various political fields during his career.

I would like to express my indebtedness to the UNESCO/Keizo Obuchi Research Fellowship which allowed me to do research on “The Application of Remote Sensing Techniques and Numerical Models to the Blue Nile Basin Management”.

Nowadays water seems to be one of the important sectors, which draws the attention of experts worldwide.

It is a fact that freshwater resources are limited and this fact leads directly to the importance of good and effective management of the existing water resources in order to ensure the desirable sustainable development.

This research therefore deals with one of the main water resources in my country, the Blue Nile, the most changeable tributary of the Nile River.

Management of the Blue Nile Basin involves high seasonality of the river flow, high sediment load and reducing capacities of existing reservoirs. The Blue Nile and Atbara rivers, originating from the Ethiopian highlands, are the main sources of the Nile floods.

Absence of timely information on rainfall over the Ethiopian highlands, and of a reliable monitoring and forecasting system makes Sudan vulnerable to devastating floods. Losses cannot be avoided when major floods occur but can be reduced if sufficient lead-time or warning time is available to inform authorities and individuals about the events and action to be taken in advance. Lead time can be extended by considering rainfall over the Blue Nile Basin (area 176.000 Km²) using estimated rainfall given by TAMSAT CCD/Rainfall estimation method, which uses the thermal Infra-Red (TIR) channel on the METEOSAT Satellite.

The Rainfall Runoff model TOPMODEL (Beven and Kirby, 1979) has been chosen for this study to simulate the process of water movement through the catchment. TOPMODEL is a versatile hydrological model at catchment scale based on a simple topographic description and runoff mechanisms including both saturation excess and infiltration excess runoff. Two different approaches of TOPMODEL have been tested as well as Transfer function model.

The findings of this research are expected to enhance the Flood Early Warning System used by the Sudanese authorities to forecast and manage the floods of the Blue Nile River. Any development in this System will ensure maximum prevention from the devastating damage that floods can cause in Sudan.

Therefore, on my return home I will transfer the knowledge I gained from my research to all future works.”

Statement by **Mr Mikhail Ivanov**

“I am very pleased to participate in this Special Event in honour of former Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi and to express personally my gratitude to all who made this fellowship programme possible.

Thanks to this programme, young scientists from all over the world have an excellent opportunity to make their own contribution to the most important areas of development, identified by former Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi. The fellowship named after Keizo Obuchi, who had a reputation as a sharp negotiator and consensus builder, imposes special responsibility on its fellows to undertake impartial research and lets them receive the necessary experience.

In my research I try to investigate the dependence of possible regional conflicts on new international security challenges, which emerged in the last decade, coinciding with the creation of new independent states in Central Asia, and created more threats to stability and security in the region.

First of all there is the problem of international terrorism and extremism. This problem is equally acute all around the world, as evidenced by the recent tragic events in Madrid, which showed once more that this threat has no borders. This issue has also proved to be the most dangerous to stability of the Central Asian region after the terrorist acts in one of its states – Uzbekistan – on 29 March of this year.

The threat of international terrorism leads to aggravation of interstate relations in the region and revival of other interstate problems, such as territorial, ethnic and resource conflicts.

That is why it is so important to show that the situation in the Central Asian region cannot be improved by single state efforts and using a uni-directional approach.

The Central Asian states can achieve the necessary conditions for stable development only through creation of a regional multi-track strategies system of common threats counteraction and conflict resolution.

In this sense the region needs the help of international organizations in order to create such mechanisms and provide sustainable development in all the Central Asian states and neighbouring countries.

Kyrgyzstan as well as other countries in the region need investigations of this problem.

One aspect of this problem is the issue of possible means of cooperation in the region.

I would like to express once again my gratitude for the opportunity to undertake this research, because it gives me and other fellows very important experience in research activity. In the future I will actively continue research in this field.

I hope that this research undertaken thanks to the UNESCO/Keizo Obuchi Research Fellowships Programme will be a contribution in the sphere of creation of adequate systems of cooperation and reduction of potential conflict in Central Asia. In this regard the activity of UNESCO and the Japanese Government proves once again the importance of international cooperation and assistance for the sake of peaceful global development.”

Mrs Obuchi, for her part, expressed her appreciation to UNESCO “for its efforts to honour her late husband's spirit through the UNESCO /Obuchi Research Fellowships Programme” and hoped that the programme would “contribute to the capacity-building of the younger generations in the world.”



From left to right: Ms Minako Kono, Mrs Matsuura, Mr Matsuura, Mrs Obuchi and Ms Obuchi

“In fond memory of a fine leader and good friend, and as a token of appreciation for Keizo Obuchi's remarkable contribution to peace and development.”

Quotation of Mr Koïchiro Matsuura

In closing, Mr Matsuura offered to the Obuchi family the booklet UNESCO / Keizo Obuchi Research Fellowships Programme 2001: Results Achieved, published to mark the third anniversary of the Programme.



From left to right ▲▼: Mrs Matsuura, Mr Matsuura, Mrs Obuchi and Ms Obuchi

