

CELEBRATING FIVE SUCCESSFUL CYCLES FELLOWS' SPEECH



Florence Nzisa Nswilli Muinde,
Kenya (English Speech)



Timur Dadabaev,
Uzbekistan (Japanese Speech)

“It is a great honour and privilege for us, UNESCO/Keizo Obuchi research fellows, to participate in this ceremony that celebrates five successful cycles of the research fellowships programme – in memory of Keizo Obuchi, the Former Prime Minister of Japan.

Indeed, the programme has been a great contribution to human capacity development in different areas and regions of the developing world and countries in transition. Since its inception in 2001, the programme has every year awarded 20 fellowships according to merit and priority, while at the same time ensuring gender parity. We thank the Government of Japan and the Director-General of UNESCO for facilitating the implementation of the programme. The UNESCO/Keizo Obuchi Research Fellowships have enabled fellows from disadvantaged countries to undertake research in areas related to the challenges

of our times: environment, intercultural dialogue, information and communication technologies and peaceful conflict resolution. This has enabled fellows to be active voices in the global debate regarding these critical concerns of modern times. The various projects undertaken by fellows from different cultures and regions bring out the distinctive features of the social, cultural, political, economic and organizational characteristics of their environment. As experienced by people in their localities, any meaningful human development initiatives and innovations need to be grounded in the aspirations and needs of the people.

Keizo Obuchi and UNESCO thus calls on the fellows gathered here today and other beneficiaries elsewhere in the world to think globally while acting locally to improve the lives of local people. We believe that is what Mr Keizo Obuchi wanted us to do and to be, for the greater well-being of humanity.

Adding diversity to research in various areas to which Keizo Obuchi devoted his life – which are also areas of interest to UNESCO – the Programme has given rise to a new generation of researchers in all concerned research areas and across developing countries and countries in transition. It has helped fellows to complete their research projects, obtain Ph.D. degrees or undertake post-doctoral research programmes. This has also enriched their professional lives and at the same time promotes the legacy of Keizo Obuchi, who emphasized the importance of research and studying across borders and cultures. We hope that these groups may establish a network to share experiences as they work to address these real challenges of our times. Finally, we, UNESCO/Keizo Obuchi fellows,

believe strongly in Mr Obuchi's motto "thinking and building peace" across the world and promise to do our best to meet the expectations of UNESCO and Keizo Obuchi, who invest in us to provide leadership in specific research fields. Nevertheless, we would like to emphasize sustainability of the fellowships even as we move into the last phase of the programme. Nothing illustrates this necessity better than the Japanese saying "keizoku wa chikara nari" – strength is in

continuing. The journey towards the realization of Keizo Obuchi's dream is just starting. One UNESCO programme coordinator said that this was the best programme they had ever facilitated. Let's think of strategies to keep the dream alive. Thank you very much from all of us, from across the world and its cultures! Long live the spirit of Keizo Obuchi!"

**FLORENCE NZISA NSWILLI MUINDE
AND TIMUR DADABAEV**



Sixteen fellows in the presence of Mr Tadamichi Yamamoto, Ambassador, Permanent Delegate of Japan to UNESCO; Mr Obuchi's widow, Ms Chizuko Obuchi; and Koichiro Matsuura, former Director-General