

Opening Remarks

by

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at

**UNESCO/OECD Guidelines on "Quality Provision in Cross-border
Higher Education" Second Drafting Meeting
on October 14-15, 2004**

On behalf of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, I am pleased to say a few words for the opening of the Second Drafting Meeting of the UNESCO/OECD Guidelines on "Quality Provision in Cross-border Higher Education".

First of all, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to Ambassador Michael Omolewa, Permanent Delegate of Nigeria to UNESCO and President of the UNESCO General Conference, and Dr. Bernard Hugonnier, Deputy-Director, Directorate for Education, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), for their contribution in this important process. I would also like to thank their able staff for their hard work in preparing for this meeting. We are very pleased to host this meeting here in Tokyo. I welcome the participants who came from all over the world to attend this meeting.

Globalization in the field of education presents great opportunities to our society. Those who are responsible for higher education should maximize the benefits of such developments, while minimizing the potential downsides.

Cross-border provision of higher education, which offers students and learners new opportunities, has long been a reality, in particular in this part of the world. Off-shore programs of institutions from various countries are attracting many students and learners in Asia-Pacific. The Japanese government considers taking some measures to respond to this situation, which I believe you will hear in detail during the meeting.

To date, Japan has promoted university reform in a number of aspects to meet the challenges for higher education in today's ever changing world. One of the most recent reform measures was to introduce a mandatory evaluation system for universities by an evaluation organization that is certified by the government. We hope that this new system will be useful and helpful for enhancing the quality of higher education and for protecting students and learners wherever they are located.

This second Drafting Meeting aims to discuss further the UNESCO/OECD guidelines, as well as a proposal on an international database/portal on recognized higher education institutions. I hope that this two-day meeting will be a fruitful one.

Finally, I hope that you will enjoy your stay in Japan.

Thank you for your kind attention.