



Joint Message on the occasion of World Teachers' Day, 5 October 2004

On World Teachers' Day, and on any other day for that matter, the basic message that a teacher needs to receive is quite simple. "We appreciate you". That message cannot be repeated often enough, by those of us in the United Nations family and by those who interact with you every day.

We highly appreciate you having chosen this profession, one so fundamental to society, and the fact that you continue in it, despite – and often because of – the challenges you face. We value the initiatives you take in opening doors of knowledge and tolerance for each girl and boy. We are aware of what your profession demands of you, of your responsibilities and of your rights. We acknowledge the difficulty of your task, and the fact that it takes professional training and a decent work environment to teach well. We appreciate the care you take to direct your knowledge at children with special needs, and your awareness that all students have individual needs. We value your ability, developed through training and experience, to listen to your students and to shift the responsibility of being a learner from your shoulders to theirs.

In sum, we appreciate you, and we call upon parents, community leaders, business people, trade unions and government officials, especially educational authorities, to find a way, this World Teachers' Day, to tell you just that, in their own words and in their own way.

Koïchiro Matsuura
Director-General
UNESCO

Juan Somavia
Director-General
ILO

Mark Malloch Brown
Administrator
UNDP

Carol Bellamy
Executive Director
UNICEF