

Greeting, scheduled on 2 September, and prepared for the opening ceremony of UNESCO APEID Educational Technology Seminar/Workshop in Tokyo 'ICT in the Classroom' 1-9 September 2003,

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Professor Isao Kondoh, Director, Council of National University Center for Educational Practice and Research Center for Educational Practice,

Colleagues, Friends, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my great pleasure and honor to be here with distinguished participants to exchange and share experiences and information on ICT in the classroom. On behalf of *Mr. Sheldon Shaeffer*, Director and Coordinator for the ICT in Education Project, *Mr. Zhou Nan-Zhao*, APEID Coordinator, and colleagues at the UNESCO Asia and Pacific Regional Bureau for Education in Bangkok, and on my own, I bring greetings and best wishes for the success of the APEID Tokyo-Kyoto Seminar-Workshop 2003. This seminar workshop marks the second year of implementing the 7th Programming Cycle of APEID.

APEID recognizes that the use of ICT in education, both as a tool for learning and as a level for change, is of great importance. It is recognized that ICT is a great innovation that has rapidly and radically made inroads to society and has made changes in lives of people.

UNESCO articulated its position on ICT in education in its draft programme and budget (31 C/4 and C/5) to be approved by the general conference in October this year in Paris. The approval of the draft programme and budget has implications for allocating regular budget funds, especially for the biennium 2004 –2005. US\$800,000 has been earmarked for the use of ICTs to improve the sharing of information and promotes access at all levels of education (primary to higher education) and will identify interdisciplinary approaches to community learning using ICTs.

In the field of Teacher Education, UNESCO's regular programme budget will be utilized to produce policy and practice guidelines on high demand topics and increase national capacity in the design of teacher-education curriculum and pedagogy using ICTs.

To strengthen ICT in education, extra budgetary support has been provided by the Japanese Government through its Japanese Funds-in-Trust arrangements. One project is the ICT in Teacher Education Project implemented by APEID. There are 10 projects being implemented in the region, which will be for 3 years. The aim is to utilize ICT to reduce disparities in both educational access and quality and, ultimately bridge the digital divide. In my capacity as Programme Manager of the ICT in Education Project implemented by the Bangkok Office, I am here to listen and learn from your experiences. The lessons learned will hopefully improve project implementation.

Lastly, I would like to express again my sincere thanks to the Japanese Government and host institution, Tokyo Gauge University for organizing this year's seminar workshop on educational technology.

Thank you for your attention.