Congratulations on the occasion of the launch of the UNESCO Chair in Comparative Education at the University of Hong Kong

With the official launch of the UNESCO Chair in Comparative Education, the University of Hong Kong is joining today a vibrant network of higher education institutions established some 20 years ago at the initiative of UNESCO – the UNITWIN/UNESCO Chairs Programme. All these institutions are committed to working together and with UNESCO to make the world a better place for us all; a world in which learning to know, to do, to be and to live together guides us in all our endeavours.

Education is at the heart of any society, as it nourishes the development of societies that are both democratic, free, just and peaceful. Quality education that is accessible to all, attuned to social needs and individual aspirations, and fosters responsible and sustainable development, has been our objective for many years now.

The UNESCO Chair in Comparative Education at the University of Hong Kong will support its home institution, as well as institutions, faculty, researchers, decision- and policy-makers nationally, regionally and globally to better understand trends and issues related to quality and equity in education and to adapt education policies and practices to present-day challenges.

We are proud of our cooperation with the University of Hong Kong – a leading institution of higher learning in Asia, whose reputation as a centre of intellectual excellence is recognized worldwide – for the establishment of the UNESCO Chair in Comparative Education. This project is one of the many examples of concrete action taken by the University, so that it might serve as a “focal point of intellectual and academic endeavour in Hong Kong, China and Asia and act as a gateway and forum for scholarship with the rest of the world”.

Under the eminent leadership of Professor Mark Bray, a distinguished figure in the field of comparative education, the UNESCO Chair in Comparative Education at the University of Hong Kong will produce new knowledge, provide advanced training and enhance international cooperation – all significant accomplishments that will require the dedication of all those involved in this project.

I address you my sincerest congratulations on your achievements and best wishes for your future success!

Qian Tang
Assistant Director-General for Education
UNESCO
May 2012
Dear Professor Bray,

Allow me to present my sincere and wholehearted congratulations to you, dear friend and former colleague, for your recent designation as UNESCO Chair in Comparative Education, and thus official member of this prestigious body that contributes worldwide to the renown of UNESCO. I should be pleased if you would convey also our sincere compliments to Professor Stephen Andrews, Dean of Education, University of Hong Kong (HKU), for his establishment having been recognized as an institution of reference of the United Nations on questions of comparative education worldwide.

The Hong Kong University has focused for many years on the vast problematic of comparative education, and you personally, have committed countless efforts towards personal research, motivating partners, comparing findings... in your role as current Director, Personal Chair and founding member of the Comparative Education Research Centre at HKU, as well as former President of the World Council of Comparative Education Societies.

We are certain that this UNESCO Chair of Comparative Education shall contribute to the accomplishment of the challenging mandate of EFA, as well as to the recent agenda of Education for Sustainable Development, towards the larger ever important sustainable development of perennial peace in the world.

My colleagues join me as we express our emotion, and pride, so touched we are that our former Director and dear friend should receive this honour. We rejoice to future collaboration with you in your new role.

Although we certainly regret that our schedule does not allow us to be present in person at the Launch Ceremony organized by the Faculty of Education on 18 May, I ensure you of our sincere thoughts now, and on that day; of our very best wishes for a successful programme. May this day be a heralding of the rich and innovative experience that shall inevitably follow.

My best regards,

Khalil Mahshi

Professor Mark Bray
UNESCO Chair in Comparative Education
The University of Hong Kong

7-9, rue Eugène-Delacroix, 75116 Paris, France

International Tel: (33) 1.45.03.77.00 – Fax: (33) 1.40.72.83.66 – National Tel: 01.45.03.77.00

http://www.unesco.org/iiep
7 May 2012

Subject: A Congratulatory Couplet on the occasion of the launch of the UNESCO Chair in Comparative Education, the University of Hong Kong

On this auspicious occasion;

The launch of the UNESCO Chair in Comparative Education,
We send from UNESCO Bangkok our warmest and heartfelt, congratulations!

We extend also our ongoing commitment of a great many years long,
To the Faculty of Education, the University of Hong Kong.

Some might say that it could in fact be fate,
That the University’s motto coincides with UNESCO’s mandate.

In Gewu (格物: to investigate things) and Mingde (明德: to manifest virtue) we too so strongly believe,
That through encouragement of greater learning, there is much we can achieve.

And it’s true, much has been achieved to reach Education for All,
But we cannot deny that many challenges still befall,

So UNESCO will continue working hard to achieve further still,
Much will depend, however, on the partnerships we build.

The launch of the UNESCO Chair in Comparative Education,
Is thus a particularly auspicious occasion.

In EFA (and beyond), it signals strengthened cooperation,
And ongoing regional commitment to improving education.

So we toast to this milestone and to your future success,
And on this important occasion, we wish you all the very best.

Yours sincerely,

Gwang-Jo Kim
Director, UNESCO Bangkok
Congratulatory Message from Abhimanyu Singh, Director and Representative, UNESCO Beijing Office

On the occasions of the Launch Ceremony of the UNESCO Chair in Comparative Education at the University of Hong Kong

I congratulate the Faculty of Education of the University of Hong Kong for hosting the UNESCO Chair in Comparative Education. UNESCO confers this honor on those universities and academic universities that are outstanding in their fields. The establishment of UNESCO Chair is a fitting attestation to the regard in which the University of Hong Kong is held regionally and internationally and to the invaluable work that the University has undertaken in various academic fields, including education.

The Chair, that the University will host, participates in UNESCO’s worldwide programme of over 715 UNESCO Chairs and 69 UNITWIN Networks committed to advancing research, strengthening human and institutional capacity and promoting inter-university cooperation within UNESCO’s fields of competence.

Despite unprecedented economic growth and expansion of educational opportunity, the world continues to be threatened by persistent illiteracy, poverty, disparity, conflicts, environmental degradation and unsustainable production and consumption practices. The two global initiatives for which UNESCO is the lead agency, namely Education for All (EFA) and Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), hold the promise for addressing these global challenges. The new Chair will be engaged with these important initiatives and seek to examine and disseminate lessons and experiences across countries. I have no doubt that UNESCO’s partnership with the University of Hong Kong will enrich the theory, policy and practice of EFA and ESD.

I wish the UNESCO Chair in Comparative Education every success in its endeavour to better inform and accelerate our quest for achieving EFA and ESD in the foreseeable future and to contribute to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).
Congratulatory Message

I have great pleasure in congratulating the Faculty of Education of The University of Hong Kong on the conferment of the UNESCO Chair in Comparative Education.

Working within the frame work of the “Education for All” and “Education for Sustainable Development” programmes, I am confident that the HKU Faculty of Education will be able to realise UNESCO’s mission to “contribute to the building of a culture of peace, the eradication of poverty, sustainable development and intercultural dialogue through education, the sciences, culture, communication and information”.

Prof Hon Patrick Lau, SBS, JP

President, UNESCO Hong Kong Association
欣闻贵院将设立联合国教科文组织比较教育教席，特此祝贺。

贵院设立联合国教科文组织比较教育教席将有机会把贵院多年来在比较教育领域的研究和培训所取得的成果和经验与联合国教科文组织的各会员国分享，特别是正在为实现全民教育和千年发展目标而奋斗的发展中国家。

祝贵院的联合国教科文组织比较教育教席成功并为全球实现全民教育和千年发展目标作出贡献。

孟鸿伟

孟鸿伟博士
联合国教科文组织国际农村教育研究与培训中心顾问
Concluding Message from Professor Rupert Maclean, UNESCO Chair in Technical and Vocational Education and Training and Lifelong Learning, Chair Professor of International Education, and Director of the Centre for Lifelong Learning Research and Development, the Hong Kong Institute of Education.

The Faculty of Education of the University of Hong Kong, and Professor Mark Bray, are to be warmly congratulated on the launch of a UNESCO Chair in Comparative Education. This means that Hong Kong is well served by having two UNESCO Chairs in Education, the other being awarded to the Hong Kong Institute of Education in January 2011 in the field of Technical and Vocational Education and Training and Lifelong Learning.

The award of a UNESCO Chair in Comparative Education is particularly appropriate and useful at the current time as countries world-wide, including those in the diverse and dynamic Asia-Pacific region, seek to share experience and learn from each other, as they move to strengthen, upgrade and even re-engineer their education and schooling systems. This occurs at a time of unprecedented change largely due to globalization and the impact of the new and dynamic new information and communications technologies on societies. Comparative education is an important part of the internationalisation of education.

Education systems do not exist in isolation to the societies and economies in which they develop and are embedded, but evolve to meet the general and more specific needs of particular societies, during particular stages in their development. It is therefore not surprising that although they share some common categories of concerns, each education system also needs to address often unique problems specific to their situation that require careful and insightful research and analysis if they are to be resolved. Comparative education can help countries learn from each other as they seek to improve the relevance and effectiveness of their education systems, to try and avoid the mistakes of others and to capitalize on success stories.

Given Mark Bray’s background as a former Director of the UNESCO International Institute for Educational Planning (UNESCO-IIEP) in Paris it is very appropriate that the range of initiatives associated with the UNESCO Chair in Comparative Education will particularly focus on key aspects of Education for All (EFA) and Education for Sustainable Development (ESD).

Prof. Rupert Maclean, AO
UNESCO Chair in Technical and Vocational Education and Training and Lifelong Learning
The Hong Kong Institute of Education
18 May 2012
Dear Professor Bray:

It is my great honor to receive the invitation from the University of Hong Kong to attend the Launch Ceremony for the UNESCO Chair in Comparative Education and the Lecture & Community Dialogue on Sustainability and Education for All: Partnership for Service in the Global Village on 18 May, 2012. I am very sure that the establishment of this important UNESCO chair will make significant contributions in the research and studies in comparative education and in advancement of knowledge building for the improvement in the world education in general. I would very much like to attend this important event personally. However, because of a prior commitment to a national level conference in Beijing in mid May, it is really a pity that I could not join you by myself. Dr. Kai Jiang, the Executive Coordinator of the UNESCO Chair in Higher Education for the Asia-Pacific Region, will attend the memorable event on behalf of me and my colleagues at Peking University.

I would like to take this opportunity to extend sincere congratulations to you for the Launch of the UNESCO Chair in Comparative Education and the Lecture & Community Dialogue!! As a member of the family of UNESCO chairholders, I will be delighted to share experiences, exchange ideas, and learn from each other with you and your colleagues for educational research. I am very much looking forward to collaborations between the UNESCO Chair in Higher Education for the Asia-Pacific Region and the UNESCO Chair in Comparative Education as well as all other UNESCO chairs.

With best wishes,

[Signature]

Professor Min, Weifang
UNESCO Chairholder in Higher Education for the Asia-Pacific Region
Director, Institute of Higher Education
Peking University
Beijing 100871, China

Phone: (86-10) 6275 1409
E-mail: wfmin@pku.edu.cn