



THE SECRETARY OF EDUCATION
WASHINGTON, DC 20202

**TO THE ATTENDEES
AT THE UNESCO WORLD CONFERENCE
ON EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

Bonn, Germany
March 31, 2009

Let me congratulate you on the convening of the UNESCO World Conference on Education for Sustainable Development. President Obama and I share a great interest in your important work to promote education for sustainability. The United States is engaged in an exciting opportunity to strengthen its commitment to public education, and it is this important business that keeps me in Washington today. I would like to take this opportunity to share with you some of America's new opportunities to promote education and sustainable development.

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act provides funds to modernize our schools and higher education facilities; we hope that our schools will use this money to "green" our facilities. I am working and will continue to work with schools, teachers, and students to encourage our states, school districts, and institutions to commit to environmentally sustainable learning environments.

President Obama also intends to make our country one of the leaders in responding to global climate change. Our goal is to ensure that we use some alternative sources of electricity, and we aim to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions. These major changes require educating our people – both students and adults – about the importance of environmental sustainability and training our people in this developing field. We intend to do everything in our power to encourage education for sustainability.

In addition, education for sustainability is not just about the environment, as important as that is. It is also about people – about providing maximum educational opportunity – at every level for every person. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act allocates a major share of our new education funding to improving educational services and opportunities for *all* students. This is often a neglected aspect of sustainability but one to which I am personally and professionally dedicated.

Again, I thank you for this opportunity to send greetings to the World Conference, and I wish you success in your endeavors.

/s/

Arne Duncan