

Inauguration Ceremony

UNITAR 60th Anniversary Photo Exhibition, 6 October 2023

Opening Remarks by UNITAR Executive Director Nikhil Seth

Mayor Gomez,

Director-General of UN Geneva, Tatiana Valovaya,

President of the Diplomatic Club, Raymond Loretan,

Excellencies, distinguished guests, colleagues, and friends,

It is a great pleasure to welcome you at the opening of UNITAR's photo exhibition. Today's ceremonial opening is part of UNITAR's year-long celebration of its 60th anniversary which has included events in New York, Hiroshima and Bonn. But today's event at the shore of our beautiful Lake Lemman is special for UNITAR. We are headquartered here, and this is the hub of our activities in all continents.

Quand j'ai commencé la vie diplomatique à New York pour mon pays dans les années 90, j'ai eu la chance de pouvoir participer à des formations de l'UNITAR sur l'Assemblée générale de l'ONU et sur l'ECOSOC. Je n'ai pas imaginé qu'un jour je finirais par diriger cette organisation.

UNITAR's work spans six decades of dedication to enabling positive change. Founded in 1963, the Institute has been at the forefront of shaping a better world through education and capacity building. Change, we believe, comes only from learning about why we should change and how can we change.

Over these past 60 years, the Institute has had its ups and downs, but has left an indelible mark on the global stage. We have worked tirelessly to empower individuals, communities, and governments alike with the knowledge and skills necessary to confront the complex challenges of our time. From diplomatic training to peacekeeping and conflict resolution to environmental sustainability, from human rights to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, UNITAR has been at the service of “We the people” to help tackle global challenges. We are also home to the UN Satellite Centre.

Today, we go beyond a mere commemoration. Exponential change is the blowtorch reality of our times. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) provide us with a roadmap for a better future, reinforced by the recent SDG Summit. And UNITAR is committed to continuing to be a

driving force to reach these ambitious goals. Informed decision-making is at the heart of success.

Les défis complexes contemporains, en particulier les guerres, les changements climatiques, les inégalités, les pandémies, la fracture numérique et bien d'autres, nécessitent des dirigeants qui soient dotés des connaissances, des compétences et de la vision nécessaires pour conduire un changement positif. La mission de l'UNITAR est de renforcer les connaissances et les compétences des gens afin qu'ils deviennent des catalyseurs d'actions transformatrices dans leurs communautés et sur la scène mondiale.

As we look forward, we must embrace innovation. In a rapidly changing world, UNITAR is dedicated to staying at the forefront of educational technology and methodologies. We recognize the need to adapt and evolve to meet the demands of the future. To that end, I am excited to announce that UNITAR is exploring new horizons, including the development of a UNITAR Metaverse experience.

Les progrès de l'UNITAR sont beaucoup dus à l'environnement merveilleux de Genève où se trouve notre siège. La Suisse, son peuple

et son gouvernement et le canton de Genève sont très accueillants et nous sommes heureux de pouvoir compter sur leur soutien constant et continu. Genève est une ville qui symbolise le dialogue et la paix, mais aussi une ville de réflexion et d'apprentissage. Merci M. le Maire et merci *aussi* au gouvernement suisse et au Canton de Genève.

In conclusion, as we celebrate 60 years of UNITAR's efforts in enabling positive change, let us not only look back at our achievements but also forward to the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead. UNITAR's mission remains as relevant as ever, and our commitment to training a wide spectrum of people is unwavering. Together, we can build a brighter, more sustainable future for all.

Je vous remercie une fois encore pour votre présence en ce jour très spécial pour l'UNITAR et j'espère que notre contribution pour un monde Meilleur va continuer dans l'avenir.

Merci,

Thank you.