

**WORLD CULTURAL COUNCIL  
2019 AWARD CEREMONY**

Speech by Maestro Dr. Rafael Valero  
President Emeritus of the World Cultural Council,  
delivered by Dr. René Asomoza Palacio,  
Member of the World Cultural Council

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Distinguished President of the World Cultural Council, Sir Colin Blakemore; honorable President NAGATA Kyosuke; Mr. NAKAOKA Tsukasa, Deputy Commissioner for Cultural Affairs, Agency for Cultural Affairs, Government of Japan; respected authorities of the University of Tsukuba; Members of the WCC, tonight's laureates; students; visitors from overseas and other parts of Japan; ladies and gentlemen:

Two weeks ago, I was refreshed to read the heart-warming story of more than ten million young people from 200 nations demonstrating to demand that our world leaders listen to science and take actions against climate change.

This moving act, by so many young minds speaking to address one of the foremost challenges facing humankind, was, to me, truly inspirational and a source of hope. Many of these youths were born only at the beginning of the third millennium. Their engagement, passion and enthusiasm reflect the kinds of attitudes and actions that are required to address this and other global challenges of which we are all well aware: shortages of safe drinking water, mistreatment of animals, unrelenting wars, poor stewardship of forests and habitats, cruelty to our fellow humans and so on.

At the core of all these challenges **lies an ethical vacuum**. Missing is a moral compass to help us and our leaders navigate a fair and compassionate path as we wrestle with these adversities. The human mind has shown great capacity towards change, creativity and invention. This same mind must be harnessed to pursue the common good, to promote wise thoughts and deeds and to act based on demonstrable and universal truths. I think that the answer lies in strengthening people's values and virtues.

The basis of individual and social improvement is education. A well-directed, comprehensive education forms a bedrock on which a great and progressive society can be built. Not only intellect is necessary, but also goodness and the ability to serve others. Every university, every seat of learning, is a beacon of light.

My call is to educators. Inspire your students to become excellent professionals. Inspire your students with a **deep sense of ethics**.

We have inherited the multifaceted treasure of all human culture and we should build on it. We should take whatever is good, from the East and the West, to teach our children and our students to fulfil themselves. In this way can we aspire to the advent of a more enlightened world in which all differences are respected, a **world of freedom and responsibility, rights and obligations, wisdom and peace**.

I would like to thank **President NAGATA**, along with his remarkable team from this honorable University, for their support and the warm hospitality they have shown us. I would like to highlight the presence of one of our previous laureates, Sir Fraser Stoddart, who I had the great pleasure of welcoming in Monterrey, Mexico, when he received the 2007 “Albert Einstein” World Award of Science. **I also personally thank the loyal members** of the World Cultural Council who are here with us today: President Sir Colin Blakemore, Professor Sir John Walker, Professor Leonidis Ribickis, Professor Gary Marquis and Dr. René Asomoza.

Finally, my sincere congratulations to the award-winners. **Dr. Zhong Lin Wang** represents those men and women of science who are pursuing progress to improve the quality of our lives and our environment, while **Mr. Paulo Branco** embodies those artists that help us to experience the world in new ways and enrich our life with beauty and emotion.

THANK YOU