

Singaporean foreign exchange dealer and global philanthropist Kenneth Kam gives powerful speech at UNESCO forum in Paris



Founder of the Kenn Foundation joins global debate on climate change

Kenneth Kam, whose brilliance at currency dealing and computer science has earned him a vast fortune, gave a speech at the Eighth International Forum of the NGOs Official Partners of UNESCO in Paris, which was held on December 7 and 8 at UNESCO's HQ.

His message was to urge more organizations including NGOs to play a bigger part in the decision-making processes regarding climate change, describing it as "one of the greatest challenges of our time".

He continued: "As a trader, I learn to see opportunities in every situation... I firmly believe that we can turn climate-change threats into opportunities, to adapt, work together and create a clean, green future. We can learn new ways of working and living, ensure that our children know how important it is to protect natural resources. Let us give the planet a new lifeline.

"My philanthropic objectives are aligned to the objectives of UNESCO. I would like to seize this opportunity to reiterate my unwavering belief in UNESCO's mission and my willingness to continue supporting the activities of UNESCO and the NGO-UNESCO Liaison Committee."

He also said: "Climate change is real and we all have to play our part. It is our duty to look after those populations in remote regions that are already affected by climate change. This fight requires strong collective action and a renewed effort of civil society."

UNESCO and its official NGO partners play a crucial role in facing the issues caused by climate change through education and research and see it as one of the cornerstones to reaching sustainable development. They received a mandate to oversee this from the international community at a gathering of the United Nations climate change conference known as COP21 in Paris that ran from November 30, 2015, until December 12, 2015.

They have embarked on a series of programs that led to the Paris forum last weekend of the NGO-UNESCO Liaison Committee in close cooperation with the UNESCO Secretariat that involved two days of diverse debates to focus the roles of international, regional and local NGOs for future UN climate change conferences and action.

In particular they are looking at the oceans as a source of eco-innovations, citizen involvement and the role the oceans play within the climate system in order to influence decision-makers and communities for the betterment of society, bearing in mind the potentially enormous challenges ahead for all.

Photo shows from left to right:

- Mr. Armoogum Parsuramen, President of Global Rainbow Foundation,
- Mr. Getachew Engida, Deputy Director-General of UNESCO

- Ms. Jane Constance, UNESCO Artist for Peace
- Ms. Francoise Constance, mother of Jane
- Mr. Kenneth Kam, Chairman of Kenn Foundation

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About the Kenn Foundation:

The Kenn Foundation is an independent organization governed by a council made up of industry leaders. Its principal purpose is to make grants to unrelated organizations, institutions or individuals for the education of the poor, the elimination of poverty, for medical education and research, the development of the arts and social sciences and other purposes determined by the council that are beneficial to the public in general or a section of the public. Its vision is to create a global community of equal opportunity in education in which all may enjoy a life with a rich, culture, good health and, most importantly, financial freedom.

About UNESCO:

UNESCO is a part of the United Nations. It is responsible for coordinating international cooperation in education, science, culture and communication. It strengthens the ties between nations and societies and mobilizes the wider public so that each child and citizen has access to quality education; a basic human right and an indispensable prerequisite for sustainable development; may grow and live in a cultural environment rich in diversity and dialogue, where heritage serves as a bridge between generations and peoples; can fully benefit from scientific advances and can enjoy full freedom of expression, which it sees as the basis of democracy, development and human dignity.

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