

Transcript

Green Industrial Skills for Sustainable Development

Leipzig, 1 July 2013

**Video Message of Aung San Suu Kyi
Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, Chairperson National League for Democracy in Myanmar**

Green, Skills, Youth; all matter very much to us in this world, when we are trying to preserve our planet, and we are trying to make sure that the future is safe and happy for our youth.

I put a great premium on happiness. I don't think people talk enough about it these days. I would like our young people to be happy in the environment in which they live. A green environment, a beautiful environment, will help them to be happy in that environment. I want them to be happy in the work that they are doing. That means that we must try to provide them with the kind of skills that will enable them to do the kind of work that gives them satisfaction; that builds up confidence for them in themselves. They have to build up their own self-confidence. There is nothing to compare with a young person who is content with the choice he has made in life, and who is full of hope for the future because he is confident that he can face whatever challenges that might emerge.

So when we talk about Green, when we talk about Skills, when we talk about Youth: what we are talking about is a bigger, better, more wide-open world, where people will be able to acquire new skills to meet new challenges.

I am particularly interested in vocational training because I think that vocational training is going to be an integral and crucial part of our future.

I come in a sense from an academic background because I spent many years in Oxford and the great majority of my friends from those days belong to academia. But I do not think that vocational training is in any way inferior to academic education. In fact I have met many people, young and old, whose experience in their work, whose work skills, whose vocational skills, have been so impressive and have done so much to make the society in which they live a better place, apart from giving them immense satisfaction in their own work. This is why I have great respect for and desire to promote vocational training in my country and in the rest of the world.

It is a sad fact that in the East, in our part of the world, there is a much greater respect for academic education than for vocational training. This is part of our culture, but we have to try to change it. We have to try to make people understand the value of vocational training. And I hope that this competition – which will provide young people with the ability to show what they are capable of creating, what they are capable of inventing in the way of Green Skills – will make people understand why vocational training should be highly regarded. And why it could make such a difference to the world in which we live.

I have to put in a word for Cooking, because that is what interests me greatly. I hope that in this in this competition people will come up with new ideas for food that is healthy, that is attractive, that is tasty, and that will also help to provide jobs that will help to create work all over the world. Our young people are greatly in need of work. Unemployment is a problem, the whole world over: especially youth unemployment. In my country certainly, youth unemployment is a great concern.

So I hope that this competition will come up with ideas that will help to decrease youth unemployment as well as to give our young people confidence in themselves and in the future of the world in which they live.

I look forward to learning many new things from this competition. I hope that there will be so many new ideas that we had never thought of but which, one day, we will all look back as "how could we have missed those?". These are the kind of ideas that I would like. And please use your skills. Please have confidence in

yourself. Please don't forget that, according to some scientists, the most creative years of a person's life are until the age of 25. So, young people are immensely capable of creative thought and innovation. Please come up with all kinds of ideas that will not only shake our world, in a nice way, but take it forward to a better, brighter future.

Thank you.