October 5, 2015

The Honorable Dr. Qian Tang  
Assistant Director-General for Education  
UNESCO  
7, place de Fontenoy  
75352 Paris 07 SP France

Dear Dr. Qian:

As you know so well in your position as Assistant Director-General for Education, to achieve a sustainable and peaceful world, young children must have the opportunity to develop to their full potential and to experience the rights to which they are entitled in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, including the right to care and education.

Founded in 1948, OMEP is the world’s oldest and largest NGO devoted to the wellbeing, rights, and education of young children and their families, especially the poorest and most vulnerable. The organization has Special Consultative Status with the United Nations.

OMEP members in more than 65 countries respectfully request that you to use your influence to encourage UNESCO to launch a Decade for Early Childhood Care and Education.

Many countries have already expressed interest in promoting a Decade for Early Childhood Care and Education. Croatia, for example, has made an official written request to UNESCO. (Please see the attached letter from the government of the Republic of Croatia and the Ministry of Science, Education, and Sports.)

Now is the time for UNESCO to launch the Decade for Early Childhood Care and Education in concert with several of the new UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and especially target 4.2: “By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education.”

Scientific evidence from many fields, including neuroscience and business, provides a clear and convincing picture of the critical importance of the early years of life. Further, research in economics shows that investments in early childhood are among the best investments any society can make. We will be happy to provide you with the scientific evidence demonstrating the links between early years and sustainability.

If you should need any further information please contact me at mkoong@worldomep.org

Sincerely,

Maggie Koong, EdD  
President, World OMEP

Lisbeth Gouin  
World OMEP Representative to UNESCO

cc:  Ingrid Pramling Samuelsson  
UNESCO Chair in Early Childhood Education and Sustainable Development