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Dear Dr. Jeton Shakiri, Minister of Education and Science, Dr. Nikola Jankulovski, Chancellor of Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje, Mr. Kiril Pecakov, mayor of our host city of Ohrid, dear Chair of the Institute of Pedagogy, Dr. Elizabeta Tomevska Ilievska, dear Vice-Chancellors of Ss. Cyril and Methodius University, Vice-Deans, directors, professors, students, media representatives, ladies and gentlemen.

1. The literary text by Chernorizets Hrabar “On the Letters” (behind the pseudonym of which stood Saint Naum, according to research carried out by the late academician Petar Ilievski) commences in the following way:

“Being still pagans, the Slavs **did not have their own letters**, but read and communicated by means of tallies and sketches, like the other pagans. After their baptism they were forced to use Roman and Greek letters in the transcription of their Slavic words, **with no particular rules in place**. But how can Greek letters be used to write: бгъ ог жизньъ, сѣло ог цркѣвь ог члкъ ог широта ог шедрѣты ог юность ог жзыкъ ог яадъ, and others like them? **This went on for many years.**

At last, God, in His love for humankind, who created people and did not leave them without sense, but rather, brought them **sense and salvation**, sent them Saint Constantine the Philosopher, called Cyril, a learned and upright man, who composed for them thirty-eight letters...” His work was to be carried on by his students, the saints Clement and Naum, who in the IX century turned Ohrid into a center of education in Europe, which would see thousands of students from the Slavic world.

One millennium later, in the distant 1920, the Faculty of Philosophy was founded in Skopje. One century of higher education also marks one century of science, as without science there can be no education. With the creation of the Macedonian state, in 1946 the newly restored Faculty of Philosophy commenced working, with classes held in Macedonian for the first time ever. The main role of the Faculty after the War was to help in the development of education and in the establishing of institutions which represent the foundations of the state. Undoubtedly, education is one of the most important segments. Following the War, at a time when 95% of the population was illiterate, the top priority was shaping teachers in order to equip the schools and Faculties. A significant role here was played by the study program in pedagogy, which later evolved into a Department of pedagogy. The responsibility the professors carried was great: Risto Kantardziev, prof. Anatolij Damjanovski, prof. Ljupco Koprovski, Branko Petrovski, Gjorgji Delcev, and others. The growth of the Faculty resulted in its social activity: the appearance of kindergartens, schools, high schools, special schools, strategies in education, reforms, curriculum development, shaping future teachers... the list goes on. Today, the Institute of Pedagogy has the same role that it did in the past: creating modern study programs, advancing the study of pedagogy, shaping professionals who will be involved in the various educational processes.

“The whole purpose of education is to turn mirrors into windows.” The 75th anniversary of the Institute of Pedagogy represents a window to a great many students both in the past and now, in the present, an open window to the world, a window through which the educator leads you from your earliest age throughout life. This 75th anniversary marks an investment in the foundations of society, an investment in science and in the shaping of society.

2. The theme of the Conference is “the 75th Anniversary of the Institute of Pedagogy – Educational Challenges and Future Prospects”.

Science is an ongoing process, influenced by a number of events. We are living at a time of crisis, which presents a great challenge to all of us. The pandemic, the armed conflict, as well as the related migration of people all demand that we swiftly adapt to the new conditions and provide an uninterrupted flow in the educational and teaching process, as well as in scientific research. The changes brought about by the health crisis, which has inexorably resulted in an economic crisis as well, have affected each and every society, and education in the process. The challenges caused are significant, and they determine the future prospects.

According to Aristotle, “Educating the mind without educating the heart is no education at all.” The changes that have taken place in the last three decades in our country, as well as worldwide, have resulted in erasing the teaching out of the term of education, which in the Slavic languages encompasses both concepts. Education has started being treated as a business “**and that has gone on for a number of years**”. Constant financial analyses are being carried out so as to optimize it “**without following any particular structure**”. The swift technological advancements and globalization are affecting each and every stage in education. On the other hand, education is not able to adapt to these processes at the same rate due to the various stages of development the different countries in the world find themselves in, as well the prospects they offer, the different conditions of living they offer their citizens, and their various economic conditions. These trends are contrary to the UN philosophy that everyone has the right to education.

If we see education and knowledge as expensive, then let us try to see how far we get without education and with ignorance. Our country, like most of the countries in the region, is faced with the problem of the mass immigration of its population to more developed countries, and one of the reasons for this is the better educational opportunities for them and their children. The number of high school graduates has decreased by 40% in the last ten years. The most popular study programs are the technological ones, so as to get a well-paid job in the more developed countries abroad, which, on the other hand, are faced with a drop in their birth rates and a scarcity in human resources to cover the increased growth rate of their economies. According to some scientifically-backed predictions, EU countries will have a deficit of nine million workers in the next ten years. In order to protect their own pension and health systems, investments are no longer directed toward the lesser developed countries. As such, all future strategies and reforms in the sphere of education ought to start with strategies to eliminate the mass immigration of one’s own population, as, otherwise, both education and the local economies will stagnate.

As a result of all this, 75 years later we find ourselves at the beginning, facing the same problems that our professors faced. Schools need math and physics teachers, but there are none, since there was no interest in these study programs, and soon there will be a shortage of a number of teachers in other subjects as well.

The challenges are serious, indeed, and I sincerely hope that reason will prevail. This is why we, as a Faculty, have organized and carried out a number of scientific conferences in the last several years, as well as forums, debates, summer schools, public lectures, international weeks, hoping that the exchange of scientific knowledge and international mobility will help us find an answer to the many problems the sphere of education is dealing with in our country.

3. Dear guests, in the name of the Dean’s office of the Faculty of Philosophy within the Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje, it is a great honor to welcome you to today’s international conference in Ohrid, best known by Saint Clement and Saint Naum, who were expelled by tsar Simeon in the IX century because they resisted adapting the Glagolitic script, the Slavic alphabet of their teachers Cyril and Methodius, to the Greek alphabet. Exiled to the most distant and remote parts of the Empire, Devol and Kutmicheva, they succeeded in turning Ohrid, from an **obscure city** into a center of Slavic literacy, visited by the whole Slavic world, a literary center where they would go to be educated and to pay their respects to their teachers.

To conclude, in the name of the Faculty of Philosophy, I would like to wish all of you fruitful discussions, and, according to the conference program, which offers a number of interesting topics, I believe that we will raise awareness among the public concerning the importance of education, while the papers presented in the next three days will be of great importance for the educational strategies and reforms leading to higher quality education in our country and abroad. I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude for the financial assistance offered by the Ministry of Education, the Chancellor of the Ss. Cyril and Methodius University, and the city of Ohrid, as well as to everyone else that has supported this Conference.

Thank you!

Mr. Kiril PECAKOV
Mayor of the Municipality of Ohrid
Republic of Macedonia



Dear ladies and gentlemen,

I am honored and really glad to be part of the grand opening of this important International Scientific Conference and to have the opportunity to greet you on behalf of beautiful Ohrid, which is your cordial host.

First of all, I would like to congratulate the Institute of Pedagogy at the Faculty of Philosophy on its 75th anniversary and to express my great appreciation for the overall contribution, as the oldest higher education institution for education of pedagogues, teachers and educators in our country.

Holding this academic gathering in Ohrid has great symbolism, because this is the center of Slavic literacy and culture. This is the spiritual sanctuary of St. Clement and St. Naum, home of the laurel wreath Grigor Prlichev and a place that throughout its long history has grown many personalities who played an important role in the affirmation of the Enlightenment and left a mark on their time.

Honored guests,

Pedagogy is the noblest science because it is the foundation and the nursery of all other sciences and all other professions. In the life of every great doctor, lawyer, engineer, scientist, artist or political leader, there is at least one teacher who left a significant mark, who was the motive and guide to the realization of dreams. We should all pay special respect to our teachers, because they have the greatest credit for what we are today, they have taught us to walk towards success and to be the best version of ourselves.

The teacher is our first authority after our parents and has great merit for our upbringing, behavior and our knowledge. The teacher is a set of wisdom, discipline and empathy. The teacher is an intellectual and spiritual guide who gives motivation and inspiration for young minds to grow and reach their potential.

I hope that this conference will exchange significant experiences from the educational policy and that it will contribute to the development of new and modern pedagogical measures.

I wish you continue with even greater enthusiasm, to create successful educators, who will educate successful generations and have the capacity to make the world a better place to live.

Dear guests,

Ohrid is a precious pearl not only for our country but for the whole world, so its natural and cultural heritage is under the auspices of UNESCO. Ohrid is a living postcard and it is a real