

Office of the General Delegation
UNESCO
PARIS

Paris, April 11, 2003, 2:38 PM

Flash Info n° 134

Office of the spokeswoman
UNESCO

35th anniversary of the founding of Auroville

Yesterday, the Director-General of UNESCO, Koïchiro Matsuura, participated in celebrations at UNESCO Headquarters marking the 25th anniversary of the founding of Auroville, a unique 'model city' near Pondicherry, India. Opening an exhibition on Auroville ; Mr Matsuura said that « as an intellectual and ethical organization, UNESCO cannot fail to be fascinated by this experience ». Inspired by the great Indian spiritual master Sri Aurobindon, Auroville has developed into a full-fledged city over 1500 inhabitants and enjoys close links with surrounding communities.

Noting that UNESCO had supported the foundation of Auroville and, over the years, has continued to show interest in the unfolding development, the Director-General stressed the similarities between UNESCO's ideals, values and principles and those underpinning this unusual community. He pointed to the way in which key aspects of the Auroville experiment resonate strongly with some of UNESCO's major priorities and concerns such as dialogue among civilizations, cultures and religions ; cultural diversity and culture as a factor for development ; poverty eradication ; quality education and lifelong learning ; and renewable energies.

The Director-General expressed his appreciation of the cooperation with the Indian Permanent Delegation in organizing the Auroville celebration at Headquarters.