

# Opening Ceremony Address

## UNESCO UIL Global Conference Medellin

Tuesday October 1st 2019



**Present on Stage :**

**President of the Republic of Colombia**

Mr. Iván Duque Márquez

**Mayor of Medellin**

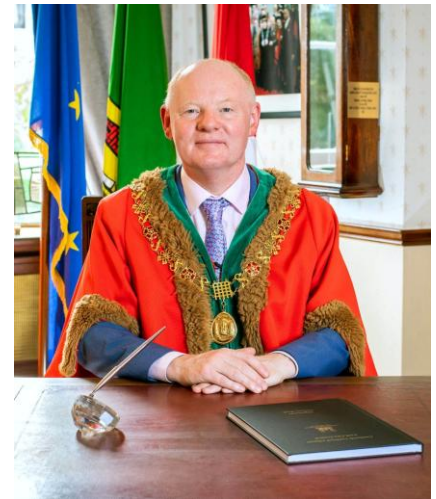
Mr Federico Gutierrez

**Minister of Education in Colombia**

Ms María Victoria Angulo González

**Director of UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning**

Mr. David Atch-o-arena



**Address Delivered by Cllr John Sheehan Lord Mayor Of Cork**

UNESCO representatives, my fellow Mayors from all around the world, Public Representatives, Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen, Distinguished Guests

I am honoured to stand here on this stage as Lord Mayor of Cork, to represent my city, in the republic of Ireland, on this occasion.

I follow in the footsteps of my Cork City predecessors at the UNESCO International conferences in Beijing in 2013, in Mexico in 2015 and of course when we were so proud to welcome many of you when we hosted this conference in Cork city in 2017.

While Cork city with our population of 250,000 is a small city in comparison, we like to think we have a big heart and any of you are always welcome to visit.

(UNESCO Learning City Awards)

We congratulate Medellin on being presented with the UNESCO Learning City Award yesterday, and we congratulate all of the newly awarded Learning Cities around the world.

We have seen in Cork that our award was not a finish line, or a medal to be displayed, instead we see the award as more like the passing of the baton, in a relay race. The baton is given by UNESCO to us cities to redouble their efforts, to go faster, stronger and harder, to do this transformative work through strengthening lifelong learning opportunities for all. And with our partners in the city of Cork have been working together to do this since 2015.

And I am proud to lead a delegation from the city that includes the leadership on our University, the Institute of Technology, the Statutory Education and Training Board and our City Council.

The selection of Cork as host city in 2017 of this conference was a great honour and I and our delegation are here today to 'Pass the Torch' to Medellin.

Medellin is a city who we met in Cork and in Argentina two years ago and it was evident then that the city greatly deserves this selection, due to the inspirational work the city through its mayor and leaders have done, using learning and education as a tool for transformation.

This selection of a host city has been also our responsibility, and our city has worked hard to live up to the goals we all set for ourselves in the 2017 conference, to live up to the it's them - to translate Global Goals into Local Actions. The Cork Call to Action that was adopted by that conference has been our road map ever since and we will report on this work later.

This years conference theme is just as challenging and we welcome it as it concerns Inclusion as a principle.

When the citizens of Cork were consulted on the new Learning city plan the two mottos they chose were inspired by others but they tell a powerful story of the priorities of our people

- 1. Cork Loves Learning,**
- and
- 2. Leave No-one Behind**

In Cork we have always been committed to Inclusion and we very much look forward to bringing this new call to action forward through our discussions over the next few days – as we strive to live up to Gandhi's words:

'Be the change you want to see in the world'

So to the conference and to Medellin, I would like to say to you, on behalf of Cork Learning City, thank you for taking up this torch, for carrying on this work and thank you for taking on this challenge.

We wish you well with this work and offer you every assistance now and in the future as a sister learning city.

While we are in different parts of the planet we have a strong common connection and a shared commitment to sustainable transformation through lifelong learning.

Thank you

***COUNCILLOR John Sheehan LORD MAYOR OF CORK 2019-2020***