

## PRESS RELEASE

### Twyford Church of England High School officially becomes a "UNESCO ASSOCIATED SCHOOL"

A three-way exchange hosted by Twyford CE High School culminated on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> September 2013 with a UN style debate at the House of Commons.



The project was aimed at developing cultural understanding between the Chinese, the Mozambicans and the Twyford pupils, through an ambitious project, which led 12 Twyford students, 13 Chinese students from Yue Xiu Middle School in Kunming, Yunnan Province and 3 Mozambican students from Maciene School in the Gaza Province, to debate on Chinese involvement in Mozambique. Twyford is linked with Maciene as part of that diocesan link ALMA (Angola London Mozambique Association)

The 4 debates were: -

1. Sharing Agricultural Technology
2. Education in Global Citizenship
3. Corporate Social Responsibility & Health Care Issues
4. Local Impact (Environment & Employment)

Each debate had several proposals and involved students role playing from particular perspectives, Chinese Government trade representatives, Company owners and Finance ministers presented their

points of view alongside Mozambican Citizens and Environmental lobbyists (see PDF packs of student speeches). Votes were taken at the end of each debate on the proposals covered.

The quality & depth of engagement was very impressive. UNESCO UK National Co-Ordinator, Robert Parrington commented – *“the quality of the debates were outstanding”*.

Mr R. Ennals, Professor Emeritus at Kingston University said: *“As a UNESCO Co-ordinator to the UK for 28 years, I have never seen a project like this one. It demonstrates what can be done. The debate today at the House of Commons was a success of historic proportions. The issues raised were of the utmost importance, and they were discussed with maturity and fluency by students from Mozambique, China and the UK. It was a bonus to have colleagues from UKNC and ALMA present. You will have seen their excitement, and you may now realise that the debate may come to be seen as the start of a new process of education for international understanding. For me it was a privilege to sit in the corner and see history being made. I am told that many of the students seem to have been transformed by the experience.”*

The Schools were presented with certificates confirming their status as part of the UNESCO Associated Schools Network.

The international students were hosted by Twyford students over the last 2 weeks, during which time they prepared for the debate by taking part in lessons and performing in a Year 7 assembly. In July Twyford students visited China & Tibet and Mozambique experiencing two very different cultures and values.

This certificate is the beginning of a new era for Twyford, in educating pupils to be ready to live in a global community.

