

Grand Opening of UWC Phuket, Thailand

1 October 2016

Welcome from the UWC International Board

Sir John Daniel, O.C.

Chair, UWC International Board

It is a privilege and a pleasure, on behalf of the International Board, to welcome UWC Phuket, Thailand International School into the worldwide UWC movement as its 16th institution.

Kurt Hahn founded Atlantic College in Wales in 1962. Since then his passion to make international education a force to unite people and nations for peace has inspired the creation of 15 other UWC colleges and schools. UWC has institutions in Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Canada, China, Costa Rica, Germany, Hong Kong, India, Italy, The Netherlands, Norway, Singapore, Swaziland, the USA and now Thailand.

The establishment of each new UWC is an exciting adventure in which inspiration and determination overcome many challenges. When a functioning school like the Phuket International Academy joins UWC its unique features enrich the whole movement.

My fellow Board members and I have been greatly moved by the commitment and devotion that Klaus Hebben has brought to the establishment of this school and to its transformation into a UWC. We are also deeply grateful to our respected colleague Julian Whiteley who, after his most successful tenure as head of UWC South-East Asia in Singapore, gave up the opportunity to do some serious sailing in order to help Mr Hebben and his colleagues prepare the Phuket International Academy for UWC membership. I congratulate all those involved on a magnificent achievement.

The success of the UWC movement over more than half a century has inspired educators around the world to adopt many of its features. Pupils at all UWCs study for the International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma, an international qualification that UWC helped to design. Atlantic College was one of the ten member schools of the International Schools Association that created the International Baccalaureate Organization in Geneva in 1963. In 1969 UWC pupils sat for the first IB diploma

examinations. Today they are taken in over 3,000 schools worldwide and have become the gold standard for university entrance.

Similarly, UWC's emphasis on education for peace and sustainable development, its commitment to community service and its celebration of diversity have stimulated other schools to espouse similar aims. The UWC movement should rejoice at this, for imitation is the sincerest form of flattery.

Our challenge is to continue to be the pacesetters in making education a force to unite peoples, nations and cultures for peace and a sustainable future.

UWC Phuket, Thailand has a vital role to play in meeting that challenge. In particular your commitment to Mindfulness will be a valuable asset to the whole movement. After learning about Mindfulness from your application I took a course on Mindfulness from Australia through FutureLearn. Pupils in all UWC institutions will find Mindfulness extremely helpful in dealing with the considerable pressures of a UWC education.

My fellow members of the UWC International Board join me in congratulating you on a magnificent achievement. We wish you success in bringing UWC Thailand to its full capacity and potential and assure you of our enthusiastic support.