



Ambassador's Activities

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Speech by HE Bernard Emié,
French Ambassador to the United Kingdom

at the Campus Veolia Environnement UK awards ceremony

2 July 2013

Chairman and Managing Director,

Chief Executive Officer,

Ladies and gentlemen,

It's a great pleasure for me to be taking part in the sixth Campus Veolia Environnement UK awards ceremony.

This isn't a first for me, because I've already had the privilege of taking part in the fifth ceremony in 2011. Back then I was keen to pay tribute to such a fine initiative, all the more so against the background of economic crisis we were going through. Today, I'm even more delighted to see all these talented people continuing to harness their energies within the framework provided by the Veolia Environnement campuses. For the United Kingdom, France and Europe, I find it hard to think of a way of achieving prosperity other than by increasingly working together.

The times we live in are not only confronting us with economic challenges: we are facing a duty to change the way we live too. By covering a remarkably wide and integrated range of environmental services – from water, waste and energy management to transport –, Veolia Environnement has played a large part in the emergence of a competitive economy involved in the environmental transition in France and the UK. So I should like to recall what has contributed to this success.

Veolia Environnement is one of France's leaders in the services industry, with a consolidated turnover worldwide of nearly €30 billion in 2012. Present in over 50 countries, the Veolia group employs more than 200,000 people.

Cher Antoine Frérot, whilst every Veolia employee has contributed to these exceptional results, I want to express to you our admiration for your perseverance and clarity of vision. I imagine how proud you must be today and I'm sure you are keen to share it with your clients, local authorities and industrial enterprises which support you as much as you support them.

The *Entente cordiale*, which has increased links between France and the United Kingdom for over a century, is exemplified – working here, I appreciate this on a daily basis – through major industrial projects. Veolia Environnement and its employees are one of the symbols of this bilateral economic cooperation. The UK has become the group's number one foreign market and, through its various subsidiaries, Veolia Environnement employs nearly 17,000 people here, 90% of whom are British. So this French company is creating jobs in the UK, as in France.

This time I turn to you, Mme Estelle Brachlianoff, to offer you my congratulations: without your leadership, Veolia Environmental Services wouldn't be Veolia's flagship subsidiary in the UK.

Today, in fact, we're gathered to celebrate the talents of those who make Veolia Environnement a success on a daily basis.

“The only wealth is man,” said Jean Bodin. This aphorism perfectly sums up the attention Veolia Environnement pays to training. Allow me, however, to update that magnificent – and five-centuries-old – phrase by adding that the only wealth is also woman!

In the face of sectors in constant transformation, Veolia Environnement has made training its main source of competitiveness. Employees from the Veolia group complete an average of 20 hours' training a year, and this focus on learning is shared by all the group's professions. Thanks to a network of 20 campuses like this one and more than 150 permanent trainers, the Veolia Environnement campuses are the front line of this strategy, which puts the human factor at the centre of this great company's success.

Your jobs are constantly evolving and provide you with an opportunity to move forward steadily while broadening your skills. By choosing the green economy, you've picked a fine career, in tune with the challenges of our time and offering excellent growth prospects. By choosing Veolia Environnement, you've picked a great company that listens to people and their aspirations. Finally, by placing training at the heart of its strategy, Veolia Environnement upholds a social model that makes realizing its employees' full potential a fully-fledged objective.

Ladies and gentlemen prizewinners, you represent the future of a crucial sector. It is indeed a great responsibility, but it is above all an extraordinary opportunity. Veolia Environnement is a group which has taken root in its various locations and managed to win the trust of the citizens and authorities, be tasked with public service missions and thus change everyone's daily lives. Looking at you, I'm convinced that France and the UK have the expertise, energy and audacity needed to tackle the challenges of growth and employment together./.