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联合国教育、
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Message from

**Ms Irina Bokova,
Director-General of UNESCO,**

on the occasion of International Youth Day

12 August 2013

Young people account for nearly one third of international migrants today. Migration is changing the world map and the face of modern society. It has enormous potential for the rapprochement of peoples, intercultural dialogue and development. However, it raises immense challenges in terms of exclusion, poverty, exploitation and discrimination.

It is vital to improve knowledge of such migration in order to design public policies that are more appropriate and more efficient. Social science research is of the utmost importance. It has revealed striking changes in migration flows in the last 20 years, with the number of migrants, particularly women and young people, on the rise. International Youth Day, with youth migration as its keynote, coincides with the launch of the World Youth Report on that theme, which gives unique insights into young migrants' impact on the future of nations.

In order to unleash potential of young people, we must consider them to be key partners in the formulation and implementation of youth policies. New tools have increased our methods of consultation, participation and dialogue: let us use them! The National Conference on Youth Migration and Development, held in Chennai, India, with UNESCO's support, is an example of a forum for exchange, enabling young people and researchers to share their experiences, as at similar forums held this year in Samoa on youth employment, in the Russian Federation on intercultural dialogue and in Kyrgyzstan on young female migrants. Therefore, I am pleased to announce that the eighth UNESCO Youth Forum will be held at the Organization's Headquarters in Paris from 29 to 31 October 2013. Everywhere, young people are standing up for their rights: one such example is the young Malala Yousafzai, who has fought for girls' education. Let us give them the means to be heard!

The intensity of migratory movements in a globalized and interconnected world calls for stronger cooperation and solidarity among States. It also calls for greater access, within societies, to quality education, democratic participation and intercultural skills that help people to live together, especially in cities, where more than half of the world's population lives.

Owing to their rejection of poverty, the hazards of global warming and the desire to live a life of dignity and to enforce their rights, millions of young people wish to build a better future for themselves by crossing borders. On this Day, I call on all of UNESCO's partners and all Member States to work together to convert this great energy into a force and an asset for peace, respect for the rights of the individual and development.

Irina Bokova