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Organización
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Организация
Объединенных Наций по
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منظمة الأمم المتحدة
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联合国教育、
科学及文化组织

**Message from Mr Koïchiro Matsuura,
Director-General of UNESCO
on the occasion of Human Rights Day**

10 December 2007

On 10 December 1948, the United Nations solemnly adopted and proclaimed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Faithful to its constitutional mandate to further universal respect for justice, the rule of law, and human rights and fundamental freedoms, UNESCO greatly contributed to the adoption of the Declaration. The symposia organized by UNESCO in 1947 and 1948 were important steps in this process, demonstrating how basic human rights values embody common aspirations across various different civilizations and cultures. Through a General Conference resolution adopted on 11 December 1948, UNESCO also became the first entity within the United Nations system to take into account the implications of the Declaration in every field of its action, and to promote education and information about this landmark document.

The international community has chosen to honour the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by celebrating 10 December as Human Rights Day. Every year, this Day is an opportunity to give renewed impetus to national and international efforts to better promote and protect human rights. On the eve of the 60th anniversary of the Declaration, this commemoration takes on particular significance. In accordance with the decision of the Secretary-General, the United Nations system as a whole will undertake activities throughout the year leading up to 10 December 2008 to ensure universal recognition and observance of human rights standards embodied in the international human rights law that has emerged and been consolidated as a result of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

UNESCO intends to play an important role in these common efforts of the United Nations system. We have developed a plan of action to mark the 60th anniversary, which aims to achieve further progress in the implementation of those rights which

are within our domain competence. These are: the right to education; the right to freedom of opinion and expression; the right to participate in cultural life; and the right to enjoy the benefits of scientific progress and its applications. Moreover, UNESCO intends to continue its efforts to make the standards and principles of international human rights law known and understood as widely as possible by means of human rights education.

The Universal Declaration has given invaluable impetus to the advancement of human rights. The 60th anniversary of its adoption is first and foremost an opportunity to evaluate the situation of human rights throughout the world, to analyze obstacles that impede their enjoyment, and to reflect on challenges that could become major obstacles to the implementation of human rights tomorrow. It is also an occasion to increase cooperation among Member States, with a view to increasing the effectiveness of their human rights policies and strengthening synergies within the human rights community globally.

The Universal Declaration remains a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations. Human rights belong to everybody, and we should work together to transform into a reality the motto chosen by the United Nations for the 60th anniversary: "Dignity and justice for all of us".

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K. Matsuura', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Koïchiro Matsuura