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pour l'éducation,
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para la Educación,
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Организация
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联合国教育、
科学及文化组织

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

on the occasion of International Day for the Eradication of Poverty

"Building a sustainable future: let us unite to end poverty and discrimination"

17 October 2015

This year, International Day for the Eradication of Poverty is especially relevant, at a time when the United Nations is adopting the new global agenda to achieve sustainable development by 2030. The target, set in 2000, of halving extreme poverty in the world by 2015 has been reached. Our mission now is to achieve the total eradication of poverty in all its forms throughout the world.

Poverty is a complex reality, but it is not inevitable. It is universal, impacting countries in the South and the North alike – but on every continent, it is women and girls who suffer the most. While further weakening those who are already affected, climate change, economic and financial crises and conflicts create new poor people in every society.

For UNESCO, the eradication of poverty is a cornerstone in the fight for human rights and human dignity. Fighting poverty in a sustainable manner requires providing everyone with the means to be autonomous and assert themselves as active agents throughout their own lives – harnessing the potential of education, science, culture and information. Quality education for all, the real possibility for everyone to participate in social transformations and cultural and scientific life – these are powerful levers for self-esteem and practical ways of creating jobs and revenue-generating activities from local expertise. By sharing the benefits of scientific research, we can improve crops and food security and ensure access to water as a global public good. Through freedom of expression, public debate and information sharing, we can enhance the social awareness and political commitment necessary to overcome this violence.

This is the thrust of UNESCO's action. Human intelligence, creativity and talent are renewable resources *par excellence*, and we can invest more in them to define economic, social and cultural policies that allow us to eradicate poverty and ensure that everyone can exercise their full rights, with dignity and social justice.

Irina Bokova