



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
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Organisation
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Organización
de las Naciones Unidas
para la Educación,
la Ciencia y la Cultura

Организация
Объединенных Наций по
вопросам образования,
науки и культуры

منظمة الأمم المتحدة
للتربية والعلم والثقافة

联合国教育、
科学及文化组织

Address by Irina Bokova,

Director-General of UNESCO

**on the occasion of the 60th Anniversary of the Membership of Ukraine in
UNESCO**

Kiev, 22 April 2014

Professor Borys Yevhenovych Paton, President of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine,

Excellency Mr Danylo Lubkivsky, Deputy Foreign Minister of Ukraine and Chair of the National Commission of Ukraine to UNESCO,

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am deeply honoured to be here, at the National Academy of Sciences, at this temple of the sciences and knowledge, to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the membership of Ukraine in UNESCO.

I must say it is a pleasure to be in Kyiv on this occasion.

This ceremony is an opportunity, on behalf of UNESCO, to express thanks for the longstanding commitment of the people of Ukraine to the ideals and objectives of UNESCO.

This is a chance to thank the Government of Ukraine for its leadership in UNESCO -- as a leading member of the Executive Board.

The partnership between Ukraine and UNESCO draws on deep roots in Ukrainian society, on a shared conviction dialogue, human rights and dignity are essential for lasting peace.

Our cooperation builds on solid foundations.

It draws on 14 University Chairs – covering subjects from linguistics to human rights education, including ICTs and education.

It draws on Ukraine's active engagement in the UNESCO Information for All programme.

It draws on 76 Associated Schools and 15 UNESCO Clubs.

It builds on 8 Biosphere Reserves and a strong national MAB committee – including the *West Polesie Transboundary Biosphere Reserve* with Poland and Belarus, whose launch I was honoured to attend.

At the heart of our cooperation stands Ukraine's outstanding cultural heritage, reflecting the long and distinguished history of this country and its people.

This includes 7 sites inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List – from the Saint Sophia Cathedral to L'viv, the Residence of Bukovinian and Dalmatian Metropolitans, to the Wooden Tserkvas of the Carpathian Region in both Poland and Ukraine.

This includes also Ukraine's intangible cultural heritage – the art of Petrykivka, the first inscription on the *UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity*, and I recall the stunning exhibition held at UNESCO Headquarters last June.

We also work together to safeguard and promote Ukraine's rich documentary heritage – starting with the collection of Jewish musical folklore, inscribed on the *UNESCO Memory of the World register*.

Our cooperation extends to the sciences, to protecting biodiversity and advancing scientific cooperation, including within the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission.

Three years ago – *to the day* – I was in Kyiv for the International Conference on the occasion of the 25th Anniversary of the accident of Chernobyl.

As you know, UNESCO was one of the first agencies of the United Nations to work to minimize the effects from the radiation fall-out of the accident.

Our action took the shape of Community Rehabilitation Centres and support to schools.

The Chernobyl catastrophe rang the bell on a way of thinking that we are still working through today.

I see this as the core lesson of our 60 years of cooperation, and this is the lesson we must carry forward and place at the heart of the new global sustainable development agenda States are defining to follow 2015.

Anniversaries are opportunities to celebrate -- they are also moments to look forward, to the work that remains ahead.

I think we all agree that much remains ahead, to deepen the roots of dialogue and cooperation, to strengthen solidarity across borders and between all peoples.

On this occasion, I have come to express my deep commitment to continue strengthening the partnership between UNESCO and Ukraine – to enhance education for all, to safeguard Ukraine's great cultural heritage, to deepen scientific cooperation.

In this spirit, I wish to end with a line from the poem, *The Haidamaks*, by the great Taras Shevchenko -- philosopher, artist, and humanist -- with whose 200th anniversary UNESCO is proudly associated this year:

Everything moves,

Everything passes,

And there is no end...

As we move forward in a world that is changing quickly, all must remain true to the values and aspirations we share, to build a more effective and rules-based multilateral order, founded – as the UNESCO Constitution states -- on dignity, equality and mutual respect.

Thank you for your commitment.

You may rest assured UNESCO will continue to stand with the people and Government of Ukraine.