



United Nations
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Organisation
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pour l'éducation,
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de las Naciones Unidas
para la Educación,
la Ciencia y la Cultura

Организация
Объединенных Наций по
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منظمة الأمم المتحدة
للتربية والعلم والثقافة

联合国教育、
科学及文化组织

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**Brief Introductory Remarks by Moez Chakchouk,
Assistant Director-General for Communication and Information**

on the occasion of the

**Opening of the Media and Information Literacy
and Games Bar**

during the 40th Session of the UNESCO General Conference

UNESCO Headquarters

Paris

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Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am pleased to open this **Media and Information Literacy and Games Bar**. It is an innovative learning and social space, which reminds us of the power of play.

We were all children at one point. The most important thing for children is playing. As we grow older, our desire for play does not stop; at least for most of us. We play through sports, traditional, board or digital games, and many other ways.

Technology has transformed how we play and socialize, giving rise to digital games. A growing number of research studies have confirmed the benefits of game-based learning. Digital gaming is now a multi-billion-dollar industry.

This is a good moment to recognize our partners, Samsung, India, and Finland. Without your collaboration, this learning space would not have been possible.

UNESCO is empowering young people to create mobile applications to preserve traditional games, developing industry guidelines for educational games, and supporting the development of creative games connected with the sustainable development goals.

People can acquire knowledge about and engage in complex social issues that are simplified through digital games. Whether a virtual game that allows you to experience the realities of a journalist in a war zone, one that help you to learn how to guard against disinformation or about and appreciate other cultures, or a game that improves your computational and problem solving skills

through interaction with dimensions not otherwise possible in the physical world – games are powerful learning tools.

We must recognize, however, that games are media. Like radio, television, newspaper, or the Internet. Games transmit information and messages to users. These messages or information can influence how we see the world and interact with others. And many online games are collecting personal data without clear consent or limitations on use.

We must recognize also that most game-based learning is not happening in controlled environments like a classroom. It is taking place independently online and through digital mobile devices. In this environment, there are risks of game design promoting addiction, and there are also risks of games being intended to foster hatred, violence and aggression, rather than peaceful competition and co-operation.

People's learning experience through games can be significantly enhanced if they have skills to reflect critically on their gaming experiences. UNESCO promotes media and information literacy, as one way to enable people to think critically about information and messages conveyed through all types of media, including games.

I invite you to satisfy that part of your desire to play, while sharpening your critical thinking skills. Challenge yourself, and do not leave after this opening session without trying the games. The Games Bar is connected to a Ministerial Panel entitled "*Media and Information Literacy and Games in the Digital World*", which will be held on **Thursday 14 November at 1:00 p.m.** in **Room XII**. The Games Bar will be open to the public until the **22 November**. Spread the word and join us at the Ministerial Panel this coming Thursday.