

**“REINVENTING PEACE”**

EDUCATION TOWARDS A HUMANISM BASED ON THE UNITY OF THE HUMAN FAMILY

**Tuesday, 15 November 2016 – Room II**

**Opening: at 10:00 h**

**Mr Badarch Dendev, Director, Division of Social Transformations  
and Intercultural Dialogue**

Excellences,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my pleasure to welcome you on behalf of UNESCO.

These are turbulent times, for humanity, for the planet.

Poverty remains enduring, just as inequalities are deepening.

Conflicts continue to tear societies apart, exposing millions of women and men to immense suffering.

Violent extremism is on the rise – barbarous acts of terror strike at communities in every region. The world is facing the most important refugee and displacement crisis of our time, with 65.3 million individuals forcibly displaced in 2015.

Humanity’s cultural heritage and diversity are under attack. World Heritage sites are destroyed to eradicate the message of tolerance and dialogue that they embody.

Recent UNESCO World Social Sciences Report (WSSR) clearly shows that inequalities in the economic and political power are increasingly concentrated in the hands of a small number of people. This can threaten growth, social cohesion and the health of democracies.

At the same time, the planet faces rising pressures from the consequences of climate change.

All of this weakens the foundations for peace – more than anything, all of this highlights the vital importance to restore, renew, revive and reclaim peace through global action! Peace is indeed never acquired; it has to be constantly redeemed.

The title of today’s event - “Reinventing peace” finds its *raison-d’être* in this fact. With a world on the move, how can we promote peace in the current circumstances? How can we help making our policies, our institutions, our organizations... “fit” to sustain a culture of peace at present times?

To move forward, we need new ways of acting across the board, we need new partnerships between Governments, civil society and the private sector, we need ways of empowering women and men.

UNESCO thrives to play a vital role in strengthening the architecture of peace. For instance, the Organization has partnered with the Abat Oliba CEU University (Barcelona, Spain) to launch a new research project “Progress and Challenges for the UN Peace Agenda, 70 years after the creation of the United Nations and UNESCO.”

This study examines the universal notion of peace, which includes the promotion of quality education for all, inclusive knowledge societies, human rights, dialogue and development.

It aims at providing innovative mechanisms for peace and aims to inspire the UN and its constituencies to act more proactively and effectively.

Keeping the peace means building it every day, in every society, with every woman and man.

In this respect, Chiara Lubich was exemplary. She committed her entire life to the promotion of intercultural and interfaith dialogue.

Continuing such work is of utmost importance today.

New Humanity has been essential in this regard. Notably through its education programs and interfaith activities, it has been actively strengthening the culture of peace. We therefore gladly count it among our partner NGOs (since 2010, with consultative status) and look forward to continuing the strong cooperation.

UNESCO's Constitution states that the defenses of peace must be built in the minds of women and men – through education, through freedom of expression, through intercultural dialogue, through respect for human rights and culture.

Drafted in 1945 after a terrible and devastating war, this message has never been so vital in societies that are transforming and are ever more diverse.

Thank you for your playing an important role in strengthening the architecture of peace!

I wish you an excellent event.