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Culture of peace

Follow-up to the Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace

Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General hereby transmits the report of the Director General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution [67/106](#).

* [A/68/150](#).



Report of the Director General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization on follow-up to the Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace

Summary

The present report, submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution [67/106](#), provides an overview of the activities carried out to promote a culture of peace and non-violence, with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) as the lead agency within the United Nations system on the topic.

The report highlights the steps taken to enhance synergies and focused actions for the implementation of the programme of action for a culture of peace and non-violence adopted by the General Conference of UNESCO in 2011, including new projects and activities mobilizing all UNESCO fields of competence in education, the sciences, culture and communication and information.

I. Introduction

1. Building peace is the *raison d'être* behind the very creation of the United Nations system. It is particularly relevant for the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), which is called upon by its Constitution to build the defences of peace in the minds of men. Tasked with a “soft power” mandate integrating the culture of peace and sustainable development through knowledge societies, UNESCO has the responsibility to foster inclusive creative change, remaining a lookout post for new challenges to lasting peace. Yet, lasting peace rests on a complex and fragile web of daily practices embedded in local settings and the most ephemeral encounters that individuals and communities creatively maintain out of the conviction that they constitute sustainable conditions for living together in dignity and shared prosperity.

2. Consequently, UNESCO pursued its role as lead agency for the implementation of the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-violence for the Children of the World (2001-2010), pursuant to General Assembly resolution [53/25](#), and furthered the responsibility entrusted to it by the Assembly in the latter’s resolutions on follow-up to the Declaration and Programme of Action for a Culture of Peace.

3. In order to strengthen the holistic approach of UNESCO to implementing more specific and focused projects and activities that build on the experience gained in education, the sciences, culture and communication and information, its General Conference adopted in November 2011 a programme of action for a culture of peace and non-violence. The programme of action aspires to make peace an everyday tangible reality for all by offering a fresh opportunity to reaffirm that humanity is one, plural and interdependent; it recognizes the tension between universality and particularism, cultural identities and citizenship and responses to the need for a new humanism. In fact, large-scale efforts of States and multilateral organizations must guarantee that security, justice, shared prosperity and stability prevail; nevertheless, those efforts are effective only if peoples, in their daily and local settings, put into practice the principles of a culture of peace. These include democratic governance of cultural diversity respectful of human rights, as well as intercultural dialogue, civic engagement and pluralism conducive to conviviality and solidarity, dignity and justice, enabling harmony and mutual understanding to blossom. The vision and strategy of UNESCO towards a culture of peace and non-violence was presented in a brochure (available from <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0021/002177/217786e.pdf>).

II. Specific activities carried by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization to strengthen the culture of peace and non-violence

4. Within this framework and in collaboration with a wide range of partners and stakeholders, UNESCO contributes directly to the promotion of peace education and the empowerment of women and youth for democratic participation; the promotion of the role of the media and information and communications technology for intercultural and interfaith dialogue; the highlighting of the importance of heritage and contemporary creativity as tools necessary for building peace; and the development and promotion of scientific cooperation to foster the peaceful

management of natural resources, as well as opportunities for dialogue between scientists, especially in conflict areas.

Promotion of peace and non-violence through education

5. In recent years there have been an increasing number of conflicts across the globe, many of them intra-State conflicts that tear nations apart, creating divisions that can be difficult to repair even when peace accords have been concluded. Conflict has been identified as a major obstacle to the Education for All initiative; increasing access to education that contributes to conflict prevention and peacebuilding is therefore essential. Building peace through education is central to the mandate of UNESCO, and peace education has been explicitly recognized as a core focus for member States since 1974. UNESCO has therefore continued pilot initiatives to support States in integrating peace education into their national education policy, in particular through the UNESCO International Institute for Educational Planning.

6. In Africa, UNESCO is supporting member States in preventing violence and conflicts, which have a negative impact on education. A project entitled “Promoting a culture of peace and non-violence through education” was started in 2012. Under the project, UNESCO developed a comprehensive mapping of current policy and resources of 45 countries in sub-Saharan Africa, which provides a picture of how a culture of peace is fostered. In this regard, culture of peace values were found in 84 per cent of national education policies and systems. The mapping is complemented by a compilation of endogenous oral traditions (such as traditional conflict prevention and resolution practices) and elements of history of Africa from within the African subregions. Resources will be categorized and made widely available through inclusion on the UNESCO Open Educational Resources Platform.

7. Restoring an education system after a conflict is an important step in peacebuilding, as outlined in the publication *Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2011: The Hidden Crisis — Armed Conflict and Education*. In South Sudan, which is rising from a prolonged conflict with its institutions and public infrastructures to be rebuilt, inter-communal crisis prevails, affecting a population of 8.2 million with an illiteracy rate of 85 per cent. Here, the aim of UNESCO is to develop a contextualized functional literacy framework and increase the capacity of relevant bodies within the Ministry of General Education and Instruction. Specific programmes on emergency education teaching are also being undertaken. UNESCO is leading, among others, a pilot reinsertion training initiative for 500 former combatants as part of the country’s disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme. UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador Forest Whitaker is engaged in the work of UNESCO in South Sudan, in partnership with his PeaceEarth Foundation, with a view to establishing a network of young people skilled and engaged in conflict mediation and peacebuilding.

8. The Support to the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) for Peace and Development Project (PADEP) is providing a collaborative framework in which UNESCO and its partners, ECOWAS and the African Development Bank, develop educational tools for the promotion of human rights education, citizenship and culture of peace, democracy and regional integration in the formal education system of 15 member States. Specific reference tools, guides and manuals have been produced and capacity-building workshops and training delivered for teachers and

educators. UNESCO is particularly active in Côte d'Ivoire, where reconciliation and the reconstruction of the education system are real challenges. UNESCO is developing training materials for use at the primary and secondary education levels, including specific tools for teacher training institutions to enhance education for human rights and citizenship for peace.

9. UNESCO is promoting education for non-discrimination through a project of UNESCO, Brazil and the United States of America, "Teaching respect for all", launched in January 2012. The project has been developing policy guidelines targeting education policymakers, head teachers and managers of non-formal education settings, as well as teaching materials for educators. The focus is on the primary and lower secondary levels (8-16 years) and both formal and non-formal education.

10. The Education for Holocaust Remembrance programme launched important educational and advocacy initiatives, including a brochure entitled "Why teach about the Holocaust?" (<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0021/002186/218631E.pdf>). On 27 January 2013, the International Day of Commemoration in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust, UNESCO organized at its headquarters in Paris an event entitled "The courage to care: rescue during the Holocaust". The role of museums as tools for intercultural understanding is promoted in South-East Europe through a regional project to support the transformation of the former Yugoslav pavilion (block 17) in the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum in Poland and the setting up of a joint exhibit by former Yugoslav republics on the Holocaust. The joint exhibit space, designed as a unique place of shared history and memories on the Holocaust, will be inaugurated in Auschwitz-Birkenau in 2015. Furthermore, UNESCO is involved with private-sector partners in Holocaust education and the prevention of genocide, with such organizations as the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance and other United Nations entities, including the Office of the Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide. Training in this regard has been initiated through pilot initiatives in Africa.

11. The Slave Route Project and transatlantic slave trade education projects have continued to address discrimination in textbooks and other learning materials. In the framework of the Slave Route Project, and at the launch of the International Decade for People of African Descent, UNESCO organized a series of meetings and events to highlight the significant contribution of peoples of African descent to the construction and development of modern societies, and provided new directions in teaching and learning about the slave trade and slavery, their legacies (racism, discrimination and exclusion) and the challenges of reconciliation and learning to live together in post-slavery societies. In this context, the publication *The Transatlantic Slave Trade and Slavery: New Directions in Teaching and Learning* was launched at the 190th session of the Executive Board of UNESCO.

12. The Associated Schools Project Network, with its more than 9,500 education institutions in 185 countries, reaches out to students and teachers and involves them in the promotion of the universal values of peace and human rights. In Latin America and the Caribbean, for example, young students and teachers in the Network are involved in designing schools' newsletters for a culture of peace, with the aim of strengthening the core values of democracy, human rights, respect, tolerance and non-violence, as well as promoting social cohesion. The newsletters are developed in a participatory and innovative way using diverse journalistic

genres (reportages, stories and interviews), multimedia tools and media resources. In Cuba, the Dominican Republic and Trinidad and Tobago, the capacities of teachers and students to become agents of peace in their societies were demonstrably enhanced.

13. Within the framework of the Abdullah bin Abdulaziz International Programme for a Culture of Peace and Dialogue, financed by Saudi Arabia, a global contest for mutual understanding on the theme “Pathways to a culture of peace” was launched by the UNESCO Director General on the occasion of the International Day of Peace on 21 September 2012. More than 1,300 young contestants between 14 and 25 years old from 56 countries expressed interest in the contest and contributed their vision, thoughts, hopes and dreams for a peaceful world for all, expressed through essay, photography, video and graphic arts. The contest emphasized the need for better synergies between the knowledge of the “other”, respect, dialogue and peace by encouraging young people to consider the “other” in the rich diversity of origin, history, culture, language and religion, among others.

14. UNESCO is also engaged in other initiatives for the promotion of a culture of peace, non-violence and intercultural and interreligious dialogue through the local media, teacher training institutes, schools and universities, with the objective of developing training modules and sensitization and awareness-raising campaigns, as well as diploma courses on the culture of peace, sustainable development and intercultural dialogue for teacher trainers, journalism teachers and journalists. UNESCO further supported global efforts with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to encourage increased human rights teaching and learning through the World Programme for Human Rights Education, now in its second phase.

15. The long-standing commitment of UNESCO in the area of textbook and curriculum development contributed further to quality education for mutual understanding and peaceful coexistence. In this regard, a curriculum that includes peace and human rights education courses at teacher training colleges is being developed. In Afghanistan, for example, trainee teachers’ knowledge, skills and attitudes with regard to peace education are reinforced to encourage a positive behaviour change in schools and in their communities. Contextualizing peace education to the country’s historical, cultural and religious environment is also pursued, in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, through the development of a curriculum and accompanying resource book, completed in June 2013, which will support teacher training courses throughout Afghanistan to promote peace education.

16. In order to assist member States in the revision and adaptation of curricula, school textbooks and other learning materials to counter cultural, religious and gender-based stereotypes, a toolkit reflecting the values of respect for diversity, gender equality, global understanding and dialogue has been published. A workshop to test the toolkit was organized in Rabat from 6 to 9 May 2013, an exercise that involved representatives from several Arab States actually engaged in the process of revising their curricula. The project is supported by the Government of Saudi Arabia within the framework of the Abdullah bin Abdulaziz International Programme for a Culture of Peace and Dialogue.

17. UNESCO has also continued its collaboration with its Chairs and academic networks engaged in the field of intercultural and interreligious dialogue for mutual understanding and peace.

Empowering young women and men's participation in building more democratic and inclusive societies

18. In a changing international landscape, the welfare of the world's population, in particular its most disenfranchised segments, remains critical to achieving the Millennium Development Goals. UNESCO has been working through its Management of Social Transformations Programme to enhance policy coherence at the global, regional, national and local levels. The assessment of member States in the design of inclusive policies and regulatory frameworks promoting the equal enjoyment of all human rights is conducted within the fields of competence of UNESCO through two thematic priorities: social inclusion and social transformations arising from global environmental change.

19. UNESCO sought to bridge the gap between research and policymaking through the capacity-building of young researchers and government officials, carried out at summer schools held in May 2012 in Montevideo under the Management of Social Transformations Programme. Policy dialogue was promoted through the regional forum of ministers of social development of the Caribbean held from 21 to 23 May 2012 in Trinidad and Tobago on the theme "Promoting equity and social inclusion: pathways to prosperity for all". These initiatives allowed for an assessment of the achievements and the identification of good practices, lessons learned and challenges in this domain. The Intergovernmental Council of the Management of Social Transformations Programme offers a platform in which to encourage concrete action. At its most recent biennial meeting, held in Paris on 27 and 28 March 2013, the Council welcomed the new methodology for assessing the level of inclusiveness of public policies of UNESCO. This standardized instrument aims to support Governments' efforts to ensure the full involvement and participation of all citizens in matters that affect their lives and to guarantee the protection and fulfilment of their rights. The methodology is currently being piloted in Africa (Burkina Faso, Niger and Senegal), in Arab States (Jordan, Lebanon and Morocco) and in Latin America (El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras), with a focus on women and men with disabilities.

20. Promoting a culture of peace and non-violence in countries in transition is central to the interdisciplinary project of UNESCO on strengthening the empowerment of young women and men and their engagement, particularly in democratic processes, in order to promote intercultural dialogue and social inclusion. Initiatives are undertaken at the global, regional and national levels to promote the participation and empowerment of young women and men as agents of positive change within their communities. In this context, and as a follow-up to the road map for democracy and renewal in the Arab World developed in 2011, UNESCO supports member States of the region in their transition to democracy. UNESCO is using the framework of schools and participatory/active learning methods for the dissemination of democratic values through innovative tools, with special emphasis on the evaluation and planning of citizenship education, including the adoption of a human rights-based approach. In Tunisia, UNESCO supports the implementation of a national strategy for the creation of 24 citizenship and human rights clubs, with a view to reforming and generalizing civic education in primary

and secondary schools. United Nations agencies in the country are mobilized around a dedicated task force and participate in this project. In Egypt, a gender-sensitive manual on democracy is currently being developed in collaboration with the Ministry of State for Youth, the Ministry of Higher Education and other stakeholders. An adaptation of a manual originally produced in Tunisia in 2011, it will be widely used in formal and non-formal education. In Lebanon, the focus is placed on intercultural and interfaith dialogue through the capacity-building of students and schools, with a view to the reconciliation of youth in a context of violence and conflict.

21. In Africa, where the aspirations of young women and men in many countries are challenged by political instability, as well as, in some cases, economic and social crises sometimes compounded by chronic conflicts, UNESCO implemented its strategy on African youth to mobilize youth groups around the theme of citizenship and non-violence, with an emphasis on violence prevention throughout election processes. In Burundi, community networks have been mobilized, leaders trained and the general population sensitized through information and communications technology and advocacy campaigns, notably in view of the upcoming presidential elections in 2015. Training courses in civic engagement, democracy, participation and good governance, including the fight against corruption, were organized in October 2012 in cooperation with Réseau des jeunes en action pour la paix et le développement. In parallel, some 60 young Burundian men and women originating from 10 different communities were trained in social entrepreneurship in cooperation with other United Nations agencies. In Liberia and Sierra Leone, where presidential and parliamentary elections were held in late 2012, a number of activities were undertaken, including through social media and participatory training workshops on peace education and social inclusion, so as to promote reconciliation and violence prevention, in particular before, during and after the elections. As a follow-up to the capacity-building sessions initiated by youth organizations with support from UNESCO in 2012, these initiatives also contributed to fostering positive youth participation in electoral processes.

22. In Latin America and the Caribbean, the “Open schools” programme focused its work in areas where youth were estimated to be exposed to violence on the basis of the findings of a survey carried out in 2012 to help member States prevent violence in schools and places dedicated to non-formal education. The programme is currently implemented in several countries, including Costa Rica, Guatemala and Nicaragua, where UNESCO works with ministries of education and other stakeholders to empower youth through the capacity-building of young delegates from the national youth council in several areas, including education, health, citizens’ participation, environment, gender equality, prevention of violence, and multiculturalism. In April 2013, UNESCO further contributed to raising awareness on the issue of violence in the region through the organization in San José of a seminar that included the official presentation of the results of surveys conducted in 2012 in Costa Rica, El Salvador and Nicaragua. Two additional surveys were conducted in Honduras and Panama.

23. In the Asia-Pacific region, where gender-based violence is widespread, UNESCO contributed to the empowerment of women, notably through a pilot project launched in China and in Mongolia in 2012 on strengthening the capacities of youth and young women for non-violence, which targets young men between 15 and 24 years of age and women between the ages of 25 and 45 with the aim of

raising awareness by providing relevant information, including on legislation and services. The project also aims to change attitudes towards gender-based violence and promote professional and computer-assisted reporting and monitoring of violence in order to, inter alia, increase safety and security. Baseline assessments of knowledge, attitudes and practices were conducted in each country to establish the current state, so as to support the formulation of adequate recommendations for inclusive policies and the development of capacity-building and sensitization initiatives and tools at the country level.

24. With regard to the issue of violence raised by Pacific island countries in the framework of the universal periodic review of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, UNESCO has been supporting the “Women’s empowerment for a culture of peace and non-violence” initiative. In particular, through a “Delivering as one” project launched in 2012 to improve knowledge about how culture relates to gender and gender-based violence in the Pacific, UNESCO has worked to demonstrate that culture can be used to combat gender-based violence rather than as a justification for discrimination, to issue a policy statement and action plan with a view to creating spaces for dialogue among leaders and policymakers, and to strengthen active networks that address gender issues in the context of cultures in the Pacific. A workshop on women’s empowerment for a culture of peace and non-violence was held in Nadi, Fiji, in June 2013 to highlight the major role played by women in the promotion of a culture of peace, reconciliation and lasting peace, particularly in conflict-affected societies, and to propose policies that harness the potential of culture to help reduce gender inequality and gender-based violence at the national and regional levels.

25. With the same objective of helping attitudes and representations evolve towards a culture of peace, UNESCO has continued to fight racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance in the framework of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action (2001). The International Coalition of Cities against Racism, launched by UNESCO in 2004, remained a unifying structure for ongoing dialogue and knowledge-sharing at the international, national and local levels to develop and enhance policies related to the fight against racism, discrimination and xenophobia. The Coalition has grown into a network of more than 500 cities comprising close to 5,000 indirect members (through national associations) in all regions of the world, including approximately 120 members in Europe, 200 in Latin America and the Caribbean, 60 in Africa, 50 in Canada, 20 in the Arab region and 50 in Asia-Pacific. The recent publication *Fighting Racism and Discrimination: Identifying and Sharing Good Practices in the International Coalition of Cities* features more than 50 good practices of more than 38 cities of the Coalition. On the occasion of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination on 21 March 2013, UNESCO and the European Coalition of Cities against Racism launched a web campaign against racism and xenophobia, which includes an online video (available on the UNESCO YouTube channel) with a view to disseminating messages on key values inherent to the culture of peace.

26. In order to ensure that such values are widely adopted among the next generations, UNESCO has further worked to promote the recognition of youth as agents of change, social transformation, peace and sustainable development. UNESCO aims to ensure that young women and men are engaged in policies and programmes affecting them and in actions promoting peace and sustainable development in their countries and communities. UNESCO continued to leverage

the potential of youth at the global level through the preparation for its Youth Forum, an integral part of the UNESCO General Conference that provides a unique space for young delegates from around the world to share their experiences and ideas and submit recommendations to the 195 UNESCO member States. The eighth UNESCO Youth Forum will be held from 29 to 31 October 2013 at UNESCO headquarters, on the theme “Youth and social inclusion: civic engagement, dialogue and skills development”.

27. Many concrete initiatives were also undertaken in the field in this regard. In Africa UNESCO is providing, in collaboration with United Nations agencies and country teams, policy advice and technical assistance to support national Governments in reviewing or developing integrated and inclusive public policies on youth, with the participation of youth and concerned stakeholders (Burundi, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Zambia). UNESCO is also contributing to the development of representative and inclusive national youth structures, including in Ghana, where UNESCO supports the creation of a national youth parliament, through the organization on 27 and 28 February 2013 of a workshop in Accra to reflect on how young Ghanaians can become more active in politics.

28. In Lebanon, a national policy on youth was adopted within the framework of a joint United Nations (UNESCO, United Nations Children’s Fund, United Nations Development Programme, United Nations Population Fund and International Labour Organization) project on youth empowerment and participation in Lebanon during an international multi-stakeholder conference in December 2012. At the conference, the participatory development process of the policy was reviewed and key policy recommendations and steps to ensure the implementation of the new youth policy were presented. In Egypt, field research to collect the opinions of youth on their situation was conducted between 2012 and 2013 in order to open a policy dialogue between policymakers and youth following the Arab Spring.

29. In Latin America and the Caribbean, the “Open schools” programmes have continued to provide an environment for initiatives on youth development and the prevention of violence affecting youth, with new initiatives launched in Costa Rica, El Salvador and Nicaragua. In addition, projects fostering entrepreneurship under the Youth Poverty Alleviation through Tourism and Heritage project were completed in Jamaica, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Trinidad and Tobago, with a view to countering poverty through economic assets gained by tourism. A regional seminar on youth movements was held in Lima with the coordination of the Secretaría Nacional de Juventud of Peru and involving youth leaders, academic experts and policymakers from Argentina, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay to analyse the importance of the new youth movements in Latin America and their impact as a means of political participation.

30. In Asia and the Pacific, projects for the development of effective national youth policies to improve the socioeconomic status of young women and men were initiated (Indonesia, Mongolia, Myanmar and Papua New Guinea). They contributed to the strengthening of the capacity of national and local youth organizations as active participants in policy development, advocacy and project delivery and to the establishment of effective mechanisms to increase the engagement of young women and men as citizens of the region, targeting, in particular, social justice, inclusion of

the vulnerable, active engagement in response to disasters and other key issues faced by young people.

31. In the same region, UNESCO continued to train young people on the sociocultural aspects of peace, reconciliation and post-conflict reconstruction, in particular through the Youth Peace Ambassadors programme. A total of 100 youth leaders from over 20 countries attended the fifth UNESCO Youth Peace Ambassadors Training Workshop, held in November 2012 in Bangkok and Kaeng Krachan, Thailand, on the holistic view of peace, health, development and the environment, and developed 50 new action plans for a range of activities, from the environment to social inclusion; 170 action plans are now being implemented by the Youth Peace Ambassadors trainees in different countries of the region.

Fostering dialogue and building peace through heritage, dialogue and creativity

32. In order to promote heritage and cultural creativity as powerful and unique tools for sustainable development, in particular with respect to economic success, social cohesion and mutual understanding, UNESCO has continued to harness its comprehensive normative framework in the field of culture. Transboundary nominations, in the context of the 1972 World Heritage Convention, and multinational inscriptions, in the context of the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, have been supported by UNESCO as tools to promote regional integration and dialogue through international cooperation in the fields of heritage conservation and safeguarding.

33. UNESCO also pursued its initiatives aimed at strengthening the protection of culture in times of conflict. It has worked with the international community to prevent the destruction of or damage to cultural heritage and the trafficking of cultural property, stressing that cultural heritage and the values that it enshrines are a unifying force for reconciliation and peacebuilding. Such was the case in Mali, where UNESCO took action to help safeguard cultural heritage and cultural expressions, which suffered repeated attacks during the recent conflict. This entailed the distribution to military personnel of information on important sites to be protected during military operations prior to the military intervention in January 2013. The importance of cultural heritage to Malian identity, to restoring national unity and to laying the ground for future reconciliation was underlined during the Day of Solidarity with Mali, organized by UNESCO at its headquarters on 18 February 2013. Following the adoption of Security Council resolution [2100 \(2013\)](#), by which the Council established the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali with support for cultural preservation as one of the seven points defining its mandate, UNESCO has continued to work with United Nations partners to integrate the safeguarding of cultural heritage in peacekeeping operations and recovery efforts. In parallel, it has cooperated closely with the International Criminal Court in its ongoing investigation into the deliberate destruction of Malian cultural heritage and persecution based on cultural specificities.

34. Highlighting creativity on the occasion of International Jazz Day, which is celebrated on 30 April, UNESCO and its partners have mobilized the international community around the powerful capacity of jazz to bring the world together in peace and harmony to share a passion for a genre that draws its roots from a great mix of peoples and cultures from Africa, Europe and the Caribbean. The 2013 celebration was marked by events around the globe, as well as a major jazz concert

in Istanbul, Turkey. In the same spirit, the International Day of Nowruz, an age-old celebration of rebirth, marking a moment when societies pause to strengthen the ties of respect and solidarity that bring together peoples of different cultures, religions and languages, was celebrated on 21 March 2013 in different parts of the world, notably in Central Asia. Furthermore, on 21 May 2013 various UNESCO partners celebrated the World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development, proclaimed by the General Assembly in 2002, recalling the Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity (2001) and the importance of intercultural dialogue, diversity and inclusion.

35. As part of its mission to enhance dialogue and reconciliation through history and strengthen cooperation among cultural institutions and professionals, UNESCO coordinated the preparation of a major travelling exhibit, "Imagining the Balkans: identities and memory in the long nineteenth century", bringing together for the very first time all national history museums from South-East Europe. The exhibit, conceived as a unique opportunity to envision national histories in a global context, addresses disputed narratives, confronts items and collections and revives shared memories. It was inaugurated in April 2013 at the National Museum of Slovenia in Ljubljana and will travel in the South-East European region from 2013 to 2015. In order to foster creativity and the diversity of cultural expressions as leverage for intercultural dialogue, UNESCO supported in May 2013 the second biennial of contemporary art in Konjic, Bosnia and Herzegovina, which was established with support from UNESCO as a platform for exchange between contemporary artists.

36. With a view to enhancing mutual understanding between peoples, UNESCO continued the promotion, dissemination, translation into additional languages and pedagogic use of its General and Regional Histories, which highlight the contributions of the different cultures and civilizations to the general progress of humanity and the constant role of intercultural dialogue throughout human history. Pedagogical materials for primary, secondary and higher education have been developed by UNESCO on the basis of the *General History of Africa* with a view to improving history education in Africa and in other parts of the world.

Media and information literacy for peace and non-violence

37. In order to mobilize the potential of communication and information to facilitate mutual understanding, respect for cultural diversity and peace, UNESCO has continued to advocate for the use of the media and information and communications technologies as instruments of peace and dialogue.

38. As community radio plays a key role in many aspects of the daily life of local communities, UNESCO has continued to help them develop their own programmes and organize debates on matters relevant to them in a language that they can understand, as in South Africa, where young people were trained to utilize community radio with a view to promoting social inclusion, creating platforms for dialogue and building societies where peace is a reality for all.

39. In order to directly address young people, who, across the globe, receive most of their information from the news media, UNESCO encourages media houses to be more active in promoting peace, as it did in Uganda with the creation of a toolkit on media reporting and on peace and reconciliation containing information on understanding conflict, peace journalism and the role of the media in conflict

resolution and peacebuilding, as well as ethical guidelines and values for reporting for peacebuilding and conflict prevention and gender-sensitive reporting.

40. UNESCO efforts to create more peaceful communities have also taken into consideration the transformative power of information and communications technologies to create new dynamics in the exchange of ideas and mutual knowledge and understanding among the nations of the world. To this end, UNESCO produced an interactive online e-course with the aim of providing young people and teachers with competencies to obtain information and access to media messages and information in general, exchange experiences and enhance intercultural dialogue skills. In Costa Rica, over 300 young people were trained to use information and communications technologies as tools for violence prevention and conflict resolution. They were also trained to produce television and radio programmes on these and other related subjects.

41. UNESCO continued to promote the positive role that traditional and new media can have in making the culture of peace a tangible reality in Uganda, where the organization developed, on the basis of consultations with media professionals and existing material, a toolkit for media reporting on peace and reconciliation, including through print and radio. The toolkit also promotes the use of information and communications technology in peace education and giving a voice to women and students in Northern Uganda to promote a culture of peace and tolerance. The toolkit is being used for the training and mentoring of reporters, editors and citizen journalists in Uganda.

42. With a view to helping people navigate the constantly growing flow of information from a wide variety of sources, including the Internet, community radio stations and television, UNESCO has maintained its efforts in the field of media and information literacy, in particular in the Arab region and in sub-Saharan Africa, where a project was developed to help young people learn how to use media, including the Internet, and increase their knowledge and understanding of other cultures, notably through the inclusion in the material of an online course on media and information literacy and intercultural dialogue. Strategic partnerships that include the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations were critical to the success of UNESCO activities in this field, in particular the UNESCO-United Nations Alliance of Civilizations Media and Information Literacy and Intercultural Dialogue Network, which organized the first Media and Information Literacy and Intercultural Dialogue Week in May 2012 in Barcelona, Spain, and the second in Cairo in April 2013. In addition, an international conference was held from 26 to 28 June 2013 in Nigeria on the theme “Promoting media and information literacy as a means to promote cultural diversity”.

Scientific cooperation to foster the dissemination of a culture of peace

43. Following the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in June 2012, UNESCO has been playing a significant role in several strategic domains identified in the outcome document of the Conference, entitled “The future we want” (General Assembly resolution 66/288, annex), including the ocean, fresh water and science, technology and innovation for development. The UNESCO water family, headed by the International Hydrological Programme, is leading on behalf of UN-Water the celebrations in 2013 of the International Year of Water Cooperation, which was launched at UNESCO

headquarters and is aimed at convincing the food, water and energy sectors to work together, rather than in silos, so as to create a more comprehensive and integrated approach to water management. The culture of peace has also been advanced through UNESCO global efforts to map transboundary aquifers and bring countries that share them to plan jointly for future-oriented water resources management. The “From potential conflict to cooperation potential” project of UNESCO, aimed at fostering peace, cooperation and development related to the management of transboundary (both surface and aquifer) water resources, currently focuses on South-East Europe and the Middle East. In addition, the activities undertaken by UNESCO in the field of fresh water have contributed to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, owing to their positive impact on environmental sustainability through the formulation of targets and indicators on fresh water.

44. As healthy ecosystems are a factor of peace, UNESCO continues its efforts to better understand and sustainably manage biodiversity, in particular through the Man and the Biosphere Programme and its transboundary biosphere reserves, collaborating with the International Hydrological Programme in cases involving fresh water. Within its project on transboundary resources in Africa and case study on Lake Chad initiated in November 2012, UNESCO developed a policy brief, which was launched at the end of June 2013 and disseminated as an advocacy tool for the preservation of Lake Chad. Also in June, a capacity-building workshop for the countries of the Lake Chad Basin was held, and in July discussions started on the development of a transboundary management framework for the Lake Chad Basin.

45. Aimed at bringing nations together to foster peace and sustainable management, the Man and the Biosphere Programme has been increasing its promotion of transboundary biosphere reserves, adding in 2012 the Mura-Drava-Danube Biosphere Reserve in Croatia and Hungary to the 12 transboundary biosphere reserves already established. The importance of the biosphere reserve concept for peace was highlighted at the Pan-African Forum on the theme “Africa: sources and resources for a culture of peace”. The Forum featured sessions and workshops on such themes as “Natural resources management: sources of conflict or opportunities for sustainable development” and “Scientific cooperation and diplomacy for sharing transboundary resources: water for peace: watersheds and oceans/biodiversity, soil and subsoil”.

46. Promoting international scientific collaboration as a means to foster understanding between people and strengthen the capacity of all nations to participate in and benefit from science and engineering, UNESCO continued to build on the experience acquired through its recognized international science programmes, such as the International Hydrological Programme and the Man and the Biosphere Programme, as well as its science centres of excellence, such as the Abdus Salam International Centre for Theoretical Physics and the Synchrotron-Light for Experimental Science and Applications in the Middle East project, located in Jordan, whose members are currently Bahrain, Cyprus, Egypt, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Israel, Jordan, Pakistan, Turkey and the State of Palestine. As the lead agency for the observance of World Science Day for Peace and Development, UNESCO took advantage of the 2012 theme, “Science for global sustainability: interconnectedness, collaboration, transformation” to further the global conversation on the post-2015 agenda and its ramifications on the promotion of science-based sustainable development.

III. Strengthening international advocacy for dialogue, mutual understanding and peace

47. The function of UNESCO as a laboratory of ideas and a platform for international cooperation was reaffirmed in 2012 as it marked the celebration of the International Day of Peace, on 21 September, with a high-level debate on the theme “Sustainable peace for a sustainable future”. The event was held at United Nations Headquarters and furthered the reflection on how lasting peace and sustainable development reinforce each other, a dimension that proves to be increasingly essential in the preparation of the post-2015 development agenda. United Nations agencies and leaders from the political, academic and artistic circles participated in the debate.

48. With a view to strengthening work and activities of UNESCO pertaining to dialogue among cultures, the pursuit of peace and the promotion of cultural diversity in a globalized world, the third session of the High Panel on Peace and Dialogue among Cultures, held at UNESCO headquarters on 19 November 2012, focused on the theme “Building peace: the role of UNESCO in the next decade”. The Panel placed special emphasis on engaging youth in building sustainable peace and inclusive societies.

49. Furthermore, in cooperation with different key stakeholders, UNESCO has deepened and widened the scope and the impact of intercultural dialogue. Such was the case of the second World Forum on Intercultural Dialogue, on the theme “Living together peacefully in a diverse world”, which was organized by the Government of Azerbaijan in collaboration with UNESCO, the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations, the World Tourism Organization, the Council of Europe, including its North-South Centre, and the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (Baku, Azerbaijan, 29 May-1 June 2013). The Forum was also the occasion for UNESCO to display its touring exhibition entitled “Writing peace”, an exhibition for thinking and sharing peace across time and space elaborated within the Abdullah bin Abdulaziz International Programme for a Culture of Peace and Dialogue, which is financially supported by Saudi Arabia.

50. Tapping its long-standing experience in promoting intercultural sensitivity and solidarity with a view to fighting intolerance, stereotyping, discrimination and violence, UNESCO organized in the context of the World Forum held in Baku a workshop on building intercultural competencies for the twenty-first century, which followed up on the expert meeting on building competencies to develop policies and programmes for intercultural dialogue respectful of human rights held at UNESCO headquarters in April 2013. A new publication issued by UNESCO in 2013 on the conceptual and operational framework of intercultural competencies was presented at the Forum (available online at <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0021/002197/219768e.pdf>). New guidelines and training tools to promote respect for human rights and cultural diversity through the acquisition of intercultural competencies are under development in the context of a project on building competencies to develop policies and programmes for intercultural dialogue respectful of human rights, funded by the Government of Denmark.

51. UNESCO remains committed to addressing the specific needs of African States, especially those made vulnerable by crisis and conflicts. Following the subregional reflection forum on the theme “A culture of peace in West Africa:

essential for economic development and social cohesion” held in Abidjan and organized by UNESCO and the Centre d’étude et de prospective stratégique in collaboration with the Government of Côte d’Ivoire in June 2012, the Pan-African Forum on the theme “Sources and resources for a culture of peace” was jointly organized by UNESCO, the African Union and the Government of Angola. It was held in Luanda in March 2013 and brought together high-level personalities from 43 African countries and other participants from outside Africa. The Forum led to the elaboration of an action plan for a culture of peace in Africa and the launch of the Pan-African Movement for a Culture of Peace, in support of the “Make peace happen” campaign initiated by the African Union in 2010 and with the prospect of deploying synergies at the local level.

52. Through the programme on conflict prevention and countering violent extremism in Nigeria through cultural dialogue and education, which is implemented within the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force, UNESCO aims to address conflict prevention, peace education and, in particular, the deradicalization of youth in Nigeria through the acquisition of relevant capacities for socioeconomic development, self-reliance and confidence. In collaboration with other United Nations agencies, UNESCO organized a meeting to raise the awareness of stakeholders on conflict and violence prevention and prepared contextual studies serving as a baseline for training material, in particular the manual on promoting a culture of peace in Nigeria through intercultural dialogue and education.

53. Promoting dialogue and mutual understanding towards peace in the Arab region has been the focus of a cooperation agreement between UNESCO and Saudi Arabia in support of the Abdullah bin Abdulaziz International Programme for a Culture of Peace and Dialogue. Implemented with the King Abdulaziz Centre for National Dialogue, a series of projects covering UNESCO intersectoral field activities were launched in some Arab States to address the challenging social transformations recently experienced in the region. Aimed at developing a culture of dialogue and strengthening attitudes geared towards openness, tolerance, mutual understanding and the promotion of common human values, they target 10 selected member States of UNESCO: Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Lebanon, Libya, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, Yemen and the State of Palestine. Four main projects with a different focus are being implemented in this regard: building certified resources for regional intercultural dialogue and piloting a service learning university programme in the Arab States; developing and disseminating material on intercultural dialogue in the Arab States; the “Reporting to others: youth, journalism and dialogue” project; and the “Learning to live together” media campaign. Within the last project in particular, UNESCO has launched a media campaign on intercultural dialogue in the Arab States to spread messages of diversity, acceptance of the other, tolerance and peaceful coexistence targeting mainly youth aged 13 to 25 years through television series, video clips, social media and music.

54. Joint actions were also conducted with other institutions through such events as the meeting of the International Coordination Committee of the World Public Forum (February 2013, Vienna); the meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques Abdullah bin Abdulaziz International Award for Translation (February 2013, Riyadh); the Alliance of Civilizations Forum on the theme “Responsible leadership in diversity and dialogue” (February 2013, Vienna); the Pan-African Forum on the theme “Sources and resources for a culture of peace” (March 2013, Luanda); the Anna Lindh Mediterranean Forum on the theme

“Relaunching dialogue across the Mediterranean region” (April 2013, Marseille, France); a round table organized by the Non-Aligned Movement on intercultural dialogue in the twenty-first century and the role of UNESCO (May 2013, UNESCO headquarters, Paris); and a conference on the theme “The image of the other: interreligious and intercultural education — best practices in the Mediterranean region”, organized by the King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz International Centre for Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue (May 2013, Vienna).

55. In order to encourage the practice of a culture of peace in a daily context, a new edition of the “Do one thing for diversity and inclusion” world campaign was launched by the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations and UNESCO, together with a group of private-sector companies from Silicon Valley, on the occasion of the World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development (21 May). Based on the successful model of Earth Day, the campaign called upon individuals to undertake one action relevant to their lives and conducive to promoting diversity and inclusion, such as experiencing another culture through film, food or museums, learning about other cultures or countries or dedicating time to volunteer for that cause.

56. In recognition of the significant contributions towards the promotion of peace, human rights and conflict prevention and resolution, UNESCO dedicated the 2012 commemoration of International Literacy Day to the theme “Literacy and peace”. On that occasion, the UNESCO International Literacy Prizes were awarded to the Pentecostal Church of Rwanda, the Transformemos Foundation for Social Development in Colombia, the Department of Adult and Higher Education of the Ministry of Education of Bhutan and the Directorate of Community Education Development of the Ministry of Education of Indonesia.

57. On 5 June 2013, the President of France, François Hollande, was awarded the Félix Houphouët-Boigny Peace Prize for peacebuilding in Africa. The prize, established in 1989, is intended to honour living individuals and active public or private bodies or institutions that have made a significant contribution to promoting, seeking, safeguarding or maintaining peace.

IV. The way forward

58. In its resolution [67/104](#), the General Assembly noted the pioneering role and the efforts of UNESCO to promote dialogue among civilizations, cultures and peoples, as well as activities related to culture of peace, when it invited UNESCO to act as the lead United Nations agency for the International Decade for the Rapprochement of Cultures (2013-2022).

59. The Decade will provide a unique occasion to reaffirm the ideals of a plural humanity in which cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue are mutually reinforcing and international cooperation can be enhanced through education, the sciences, culture and communication and information, bringing about a deeper rapprochement of cultures and countries. It is also a suitable framework in which to build on and further the achievements of the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-violence for the Children of the World (2001-2010) and the International Year for the Rapprochement of Cultures (2010).

60. In this regard, UNESCO has launched a consultation with all relevant partners of the United Nations, including intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations and civil society, to solicit contributions and inputs for the development of an action plan that could pave the way towards an authentic rapprochement of cultures. The objective is to have a flexible and efficient tool with which to identify strategic initiatives, programmes and activities at the local, national, regional and global levels and underline the particular value and impact of intercultural and interreligious dialogue as a means of nourishing harmonious sustainability of the world's rich diversity.

61. Given the variety of resolutions adopted by the General Assembly on themes pertaining to the culture of peace and non-violence, dialogue, cultural diversity, peaceful coexistence, tolerance and mutual understanding, including resolution [67/104](#) on the promotion of interreligious and intercultural dialogue, understanding and cooperation for peace, it is recommended that **the possibility of better articulating the implementation of those resolutions and reporting in a single framework be considered, which would allow for an increased focus and follow-up on distinct but related issues while reducing inefficiencies and redundancies.**

62. Bearing in mind that one of the key objectives of those resolutions by the General Assembly is to translate the universal values of peace, human dignity and solidarity into attitudes and behaviours predisposing people to respect each other and act with sincere respect of the unity in diversity of humankind, a single and flexible framework would offer a basis for more fruitful partnerships at all levels. This would prove crucial, as the challenges ahead indicate that **widening the scope of dialogue beyond the circles of those who are already convinced of its potential for peace and harmony will be essential.**

63. History has taught that peace should never be taken for granted. It is never automatic, permanent or self-maintaining. It requires active investments, enlightened leadership, powerful educational values, a progressive media world and efforts towards the common welfare. Peace does not happen in a void. It builds on and fosters human and sustainable development. In line with resolution [67/104](#), **increased attention should be given to the close links between cultural diversity, dialogue and development.** Likewise, peace and development are two sides of the same coin, as affirmed by the Heads of State and Government at the Leaders' Forum of the thirty-sixth session of the General Conference of UNESCO and reasserted on the International Day of Peace at a high-level debate on the culture of peace and non-violence organized by UNESCO at United Nations Headquarters.

64. The Secretary-General has recognized that peace should be considered a strategic dimension of the post-2015 development paradigm. **As peace cannot be reduced to the mere absence of conflict, and as it requires positive dispositions towards such values as respect for dignity and diversity, intercultural dialogue and mutual understanding, there must be a joint effort to translate these values into the post-2015 global development objectives to be adopted by the international community, Governments and civil society organizations.**