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联合国教育、
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Message from

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

on the occasion of the World Book and Copyright Day

UNESCO, 23 April 2013

UNESCO has celebrated World Book and Copyright Day on 23 April for 17 years now. UNESCO Member States around the world celebrate the power of books to bring us together and transmit the culture of peoples and their dreams of a better future.

This day provides an opportunity to reflect together on ways to better disseminate the culture of the written word and to allow all individuals, men, women and children to access it, through literacy programmes and support for careers in publishing, book shops, libraries and schools. Books are our allies in spreading education, science, culture and information worldwide.

The city of Bangkok has been designated "World Book Capital 2013" in recognition of its programme to promote reading among young people and underprivileged sections of the population. This is a source of inspiration in our collective efforts to promote editorial diversity, and to protect intellectual property and equitable access to the wealth of books. UNESCO is committed to this work in the spirit of the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, along with all its partners, including the International Publishers Association, the International Booksellers' Federation and the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions.

This day also calls us to reflect on the changes in books over the long term and the intangible values that should guide us. Digital books offer new opportunities for access to knowledge, at reduced costs and over wide geographical areas. Traditional books are still powerful technology: failsafe, portable and standing the test of time. All forms of books make a valuable contribution to education and the dissemination of culture and information. The diversity of books and editorial content is a source of enrichment that we must support through appropriate public policies and protect from uniformity. This *bibliodiversity* is our common wealth, making books much more than a physical object, for they are our most beautiful invention for sharing ideas beyond the boundaries of space and time.

Irina Bokova