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**Message from Ms Irina Bokova,**

**Director-General of UNESCO**

**on the occasion of the World Refugee Day**

**20 June 2017**

The world is undergoing the largest ever recorded forced movement and displacement of people. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, in 2015, 65.3 million people were displaced by conflict, disaster, violence and persecution around the world -- including nearly 21.3 million refugees. Since then, trends have gathered pace, tearing apart families and changing societies, affecting each of us as members of a single humanity. *World Refugee Day* is an opportunity to honour their strength, courage and resilience in the quest for peace. It is also a call to action to all, to defend the rights of every woman and man, to tackle the root causes of displacement, to strengthen support for all refugees, in a spirit of shared responsibility, human rights and respect. This must start with education for all, youth empowerment and social inclusion, to take forward the promise of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, to leave no one behind. This call for solidarity in action is UNESCO's message of *World Refugee Day*.

Irina Bokova