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Organización
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para la Educación,
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联合国教育、
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Message from Ms Audrey Azoulay,

Director-General of UNESCO

on the occasion of the

International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People

29 November 2019

In the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the world made a promise to leave no one behind. In this spirit, the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People is an opportunity to support the Palestinian people's aspiration for peace based on respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It is a time to reaffirm that solidarity is a transformational force, which builds on the diversity of humanity to bind all societies together.

To fulfil this promise, we must strengthen the foundations of peace by starting in the minds of women and men, through dialogue and mutual understanding. This is the essence of UNESCO's mandate to build resilience and empower the Palestinian people by providing access to inclusive and quality education, by protecting and promoting cultural heritage, and by advancing freedom of expression through the safety of journalists and access to information, as key conditions for democracy and development.

UNESCO, in collaboration with other United Nations agencies on the ground, plays an active role in strengthening the education system and promoting quality lifelong learning for children, young people and adults. One of the ways it does this is through the "Education in Emergencies" programme, which establishes schools as safe zones. We also work to develop cultural and creative industries in Palestine through flagship initiatives such as the project "You Are Next: Empowering Creative Women". In addition, UNESCO supports Palestinian efforts to strengthen access to independent and pluralistic media, including through joint training courses for journalists and security forces.

UNESCO's position is clear: lasting peace can only be built on respect for the human rights and dignity of every Palestinian woman and man. On this International Day, this is our message – dialogue, tolerance and justice are essential for solidarity with the Palestinian people.