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UNESCO chief highlights importance of cultural diversity on World Day



Celebration of World Day of Cultural Diversity, 21 May

21 May 2009 – Cultural diversity offers a wealth of opportunities for mutual exchanges and borrowings, the head of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization ([UNESCO](#)) said today, calling for nations to boost efforts to foster dialogue among cultures. In a statement marking the World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development, Director-General Koïchiro Matsuura underscored his agency's belief that cultures are interdependent, not monolithic, and that diversity is a source of strength and unity.

"Yet we see daily evidence of the destabilizing forces of ignorance and mistrust and of the magnitude of the task ahead of us," he said. "The management of cultural diversity is undoubtedly one of the central challenges facing many societies today as they work to build inclusive and pluralistic knowledge societies."

Two renowned calligraphers from different traditions – China and Iran – intertwined their writing to celebrate the Day at UNESCO headquarters in Paris. Master Fan Zeng and Hassan Makaremi provided a poetic illustration on learning how to learn about others and live together.

The agency's International Festival of Cultural Diversity, running from 11-22 May, has been commemorated worldwide, seeking to raise awareness of the messages of diversity, freedom and human dignity.

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