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## **Arts education the focus of UN-backed cultural conference opening today**



Irina Bokova, Director-General of UNESCO

25 May 2010 – The importance of arts education both in and out of school, with its potential to enhance the understanding of different cultures, is the focus of a United Nations-backed conference of leading experts that opened today in Seoul, Republic of Korea.

“A broad arts education teaches the importance and value of cultural diversity,” UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization ([UNESCO](#)) Director-General Irina Bokova told the Second World Conference on Arts Education. “This cultural awareness is of immense benefit in our increasingly multicultural modern societies, where to understand another culture is to better understand one’s neighbour.”

The conference, co-organized by UNESCO and the ROK, will build on the work of the First World Conference on Arts Education held in Lisbon in 2006, particularly its main outcome, the Road Map for Arts Education, a policy-guiding document that it will evaluate to measure its success.

The four-day meeting will also address the socio-cultural dimensions of arts education, including digital media and popular culture; peacebuilding in post-conflict situations; and the environment. Special attention will be paid to enhancing partnerships and networks.

In celebration of the 2010 International Year for the Rapprochement of Cultures, a special session will be held to discuss how arts education can support this rapprochement. The conference will produce a final report including development goals for arts education.

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