

MESSAGE

FROM MS. AUDREY AZOULAY, DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF UNESCO
ON THE OCCASION OF THE INTERNATIONAL DAY OF LIGHT

16 May 2018



This first International Day of Light celebrates the role that light plays in the lives of the citizens of the world.

Building on the successes of the International Year of Light (2015), this global initiative will provide an annual event for the continued appreciation of light and the role it plays in the sciences, culture and the arts, education, and sustainable development.

From gamma rays to radio waves, the spectrum of light provides insights both far-ranging and near, from the origin of the Universe to technologies that have shaped our society, in fields as diverse as medicine, agriculture, energy, and optics for cultural heritage protection.

Light has had significant impact on the visual and performing arts, literature, and human thinking. Studying the connection between light and culture provides valuable insights into the interactions between science, art, and the humanities, and brings greater understanding and appreciation of our cultural heritage. Studying light can inspire science education among young people, as well as stimulating entrepreneurship.

Light can also aid in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals set in the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Access to light and energy infrastructure can improve quality of life in the developing world, whilst fibre optics connect the citizens of the world through the Internet. These networks also support accountability to ensure peace, justice, and stronger legal institutions.

UNESCO is delighted to continue strengthening its collaboration with the international scientific community through the important theme of light. And, with this new International Day on the UNESCO calendar, we now have a special opportunity to do so every year.

So together, every year on May 16, let us light up the world!

Audrey Azoulay

