



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization

Organisation  
des Nations Unies  
pour l'éducation,  
la science et la culture

Organización  
de las Naciones Unidas  
para la Educación,  
la Ciencia y la Cultura

Организация  
Объединенных Наций по  
вопросам образования,  
науки и культуры

منظمة الأمم المتحدة  
للتربية والعلم والثقافة

联合国教育、  
科学及文化组织

## **Genfest 2012 – “Let’s Bridge”**

**Budapest, Hungary**  
**31 August – 2 September 2012**

### **Welcoming words at the opening ceremony**

by

**H.E. Ms Katalin Bogyay**  
**President of the General Conference**

Dear Ms Maria Voce, President of Focolare Movement,

Dear Mr István Tarlós, Mayor of Budapest,

Dear Archbishop Alberto Bottari de Castello,

Dear participants,

As the President of the General Conference of UNESCO, and as a Hungarian with deep roots in the cultural life of this city, I welcome all of you to the “capital of the culture of unity” – Budapest – for Genfest 2012, organized by the “New Humanity” under the patronage of UNESCO. In the city of beautiful bridges towering over river Danube, which have long stood as the symbols of friendship and dialogue between the East and the West, you will be part of a remarkable experience of bridging people and societies. Bridges connect people, break down artificial barriers, foster dialogue, and provide foundation for building lasting peace.

Each and every one of you has come here with an important mission. You are the representatives of our future generation, charged with uniting the divided world. You represent the hope that as a united whole, the humanity will find a way to lift the world out of its current crises. You hold the key to transforming attitudes globally to bring about a peaceful world.

The need for a fundamental change in our attitudes is all too clear. The noble goal of UNESCO – to achieve lasting peace based on the cooperation between peoples in the cultural, scientific and educational spheres, has not been realized. The unconstrained exploitation of our finite resources, the rapacious consumption-driven global economy, and the explosive growth of social divisions and exclusions have come together into a perfect storm threatening the future of humanity.

Positive transformations start from and within an individual. An avalanche of an incredible force accumulates from the movement of particular snowflakes on top of a mountain. Powerful ideas are generated

in the minds of individuals and spread with a lightning speed of modern information technologies to transform societies in most fundamental ways.

Each one of you has the potential to generate creative solutions to humanity's pressing problems. But in isolation, these ideas will not thrive. Only if we manage to unite across the existing cultural, ethnic, and social divisions, will our ideas have a chance to come together and spread for a truly global impact.

Let these be the ideas of intercultural cooperation, ideas of celebrating our differences, ideas of durable peace.

I wish you a wonderful experience of bridge-building in Budapest for the coming days.

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## **Genfest 2012 – “Let’s Bridge”**

**Budapest, Hungary - 1<sup>st</sup> September 2012**

### **Message**

### **Launching of “United World Project” and “Sharing with Africa” operation**

by

**H.E. Ms Katalin Bogyay  
President of the General Conference**

Ubuntu – a philosophy that recognizes the fundamental fact of human existence – that we are what we are because we belong; we participate; we share, is the gift of Africa to the entire humankind. You, my dear friends, are the messengers of this philosophy who will transmit it to future generations, spread it around the world, and give it a truly global meaning. Through your actions, you will demonstrate that we cannot be human all by ourselves, that we are deeply connected to one another and have responsibilities towards each other.

When we live Ubuntu, we are open and compassionate towards fellow human beings, regardless of our differences, because we are secure and well-grounded in our own culture, aware of our belonging to a greater whole of humanity. Ubuntu makes a dialogue possible, where we truly listen to each other.

The shared, global challenges we face today in environmental, social or economic spheres call for shared, global responses.

In the spirit of Ubuntu, you, the representatives of the global youth, will seek and discover untapped potential of human diversity, inspire new ideas amongst your peers, and create innovative solutions.

I wish you strength and courage as you set out to translate this philosophy into reality through various grass-roots projects and initiatives, involving cultural and artistic exchanges between the youth of the various regions of the world.