

## **International Theatre Institute ITI**

### **World Organization for the Performing Arts**

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### **Federico Mayor 1991**

Today as never before, humankind stands at a crossroad : we must choose, boldly and imaginatively, the path of co-operation, understanding and unity.

The great challenge of our time is to enter the next millennium through the gate of culture and creativity -distinctive features of the human condition- release the vast creative potential of all men and women and create together a universal dimension –which, far from crushing their individual and group identity, will give them a fresh opportunity for personal fulfillment and progress in a context of peace.

The world is no longer what it was. Historic initiatives no longer emanate from a few select places: they are now springing up on all sides, in countries which are beginning to take their destiny into their own hands, spiritual and cultural communities which are refining their own group identity and individuals claiming their basic freedoms. This need for creative diversity will loom ever larger in the future.

Only if states, intergovernmental and international non-governmental organizations, private organizations, foundations and individuals are all mobilized together will it be possible to create a new frame of mind conducive to dialogue and concerted action in order to take up the challenge and meet these demands. Here I should like to draw attention to the special role, which can and should be played by the international theatrical community.

Of all the arts and crafts, the drama is perhaps the only one which cannot divorce itself from the misfortunes, troubles and fears of its day and which speaks to everyone since its needs everyone in order to retain its vitality. Situated at the intersection of the most varied patterns of awareness, ideas and creative impulses, UNESCO likewise mirrors the realities of our world in all their complexity and with all their contradictions. Just as the great family of authors, composers, performers and stage technicians gathered together within the International Theatre Institute has set itself the goal of “untiring service in the ideals of peace, co-operation and mutual understanding”, UNESCO is the only member of the United Nations family whose clearly stated vocation it is to be first and foremost a body for international intellectual co-operation aimed at maintaining and strengthening world peace.

So it is that, if we redouble and diversify the efforts whereby theatre people, especially those from the poorest regions, can come together, exchange their experiences and enrich the universal heritage of knowledge, we can all work together for a more creative and a more friendly world.