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Message from Mr Koïchiro Matsuura
Director-General of UNESCO
on the occasion of World Philosophy Day

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“Dialogue: between whom and on what?”, that is the question at the heart of this celebration of World Philosophy Day, generously hosted by Turkey this year.

To give greater depth to political, philosophical and intercultural dialogue and to mutual understanding of shared memories and values, ambitions and joint projects admittedly requires an updated chart of lines of convergence and divergence, of the differences, silences, misunderstandings and deadlocks that are always possible.

The purpose of this Day is therefore to set out the conditions for such a universal dialogue by opening up to the diversity of interlocutors, and of philosophical currents and traditions, in an endeavour to take stock, to provide a perspective on the world and to engage in a critical rereading of our concepts and ways of thinking.

By giving a voice to civil society, to philosophers, historians, educators and researchers, UNESCO seeks to promote a wide-ranging debate open to the momentum of ideas.

A forum and meeting place for cultures, Philosophy Day is first and foremost a collective exercise in free, reasoned and informed thinking on the major challenges of our time. UNESCO, for its part, is pleased to issue on this occasion a comprehensive study on the teaching of philosophy throughout the world entitled *Philosophy: A School of Freedom – Teaching philosophy and learning to philosophize: Status and prospects*, which is intended to place philosophy at the core of the project for knowledge societies.

I sincerely hope that a great many Member States will attend this gathering and join in the celebration of World Philosophy Day, extending the debates to all social actors and, in particular, the youngest, in the hope of re-establishing and refreshing our different intellectual landscapes.

Koïchiro Matsuura