



Last year, on the occasion of the first “Forum UNESCO-Universities and Heritage” seminar in Spain, UNESCO’s Director General declared:

*“By investing efforts in cooperating on joint projects for protecting heritage and the environment, universities are playing their rightful role in supporting development. Active support for architectural heritage helps young people to build a new ethic for managing space. Their contacts with specialist and practitioners of the disciplines involved will undoubtedly be a source of inspiration for them. Heritage itself will profit as the interuniversity network fosters a sense of unity and uniqueness among young people – one earth, one heritage, to preserve and pass on, together.”*

UNESCO Office in Canada, in the name of Mr Federico Mayor, Director General of UNESCO, wishes to thank all those who accepted this invitation, also extended by the Rector of Laval University. Welcome to the second Seminar of Forum UNESCO - Universities and Heritage to be held in the beautiful city of Québec, one of the heritage treasures of humanity and headquarters to our Office in Canada.

1997 is an opportune year for such a meeting. As you know, celebration has been made, and continues to be held to commemorate the twenty-fifth anniversary of the World Heritage Convention (1972).

At UNESCO, we are convinced that you, as representatives of universities, of specialized institutions, and of civil society, agree that our task for the preservation and promotion of our cultural and natural heritage goes far beyond the simple preservation of sites, landscapes and monuments. Localized acts and attitudes can often have irreversible repercussions at planetary level. This creates a moral obligation for decision makers to be vigilant and forces all of us, whether men, women or youth, to take preventive measures to ensure harmony in our common destiny.

On that note, I wish you stimulating debates and wealth of learning

**Ndèye Fall**  
**UNESCO Representative in Canada**