



# The Role of Higher Education in Fostering the Culture of Dialogue and Understanding

4 – 6 November, 2009  
Notre Dame University – Louaize, Lebanon

The International Association of Universities (IAU) and Notre Dame University – Louaize are jointly organizing the 2009 IAU International Conference on *The Role of Higher Education in Fostering the Culture of Dialogue and Understanding*. It will be held at and hosted by Notre Dame University – Louaize in Lebanon, on **November 4-6, 2009**.

## Introduction

The beginning of the 21st century has witnessed the continuation of serious social, cultural and political unrest and conflict worldwide. The almost unprecedented economic crisis is likely to increase the turmoil and compound the complexity of finding solutions. Today's society seems more fragmented and unstable than ever. Given the diversity of cultural communities in Lebanon which is mirrored in its educational institutions, the country serves as a microcosm for exploring issues of inter-cultural dialogue and understanding.

This IAU international conference will bring together higher educational leaders, scholars and others interested in exploring and sharing views, ideas and examples of innovative ways by which higher education, in all aspects of its mission, can foster dialogue and understanding in the context of diverse societies and a globally inter-connected world.

*How can higher education institutions (HEIs) maximize the benefits of diversity by creating a culture of appreciation for other perspectives, traditions and points of view? What challenges, or even risks, will universities face when they choose to promote the culture of dialogue and understanding locally and globally? What can HEIs do to prepare their graduates for a culturally diverse world?*

## The programme

The Keynote Address will be delivered by *Federico Mayor Zaragoza*, President, Culture of Peace Foundation, Former Director-General of UNESCO, Co-Chair of the High Level Group United Nations Alliance of Civilizations.

**Plenary sessions** will focus on:

- Why and How to Develop the Culture of Dialogue?  
Challenges from Institutional, Local and Global Perspectives.
- Instilling the Culture of Dialogue in Higher Education

