

Good morning,

I am Alexandre Pletser, General Coordinator of URTI, the International Radio and Television Union, the oldest association of public service media, created within UNESCO in 1949!

Since then, we have become an autonomous non-profit association, but still in a privileged partnership with UNESCO, and with members around the world. And lately we have returned to a position of facilitator for international partnerships, with our sister associations like the European Broadcasting Union (EBU), the Asian Pacific Broadcasting Union (ABU) or the African Broadcasting Union. Together, we reach $\frac{3}{4}$ of the world's population.

The challenges of the contemporary world facing UNESCO are numerous, and have been developed many times during this general policy discussion, and very well summarized by the Director-General in her Medium-Term Strategy Note for 2022-2029.

To meet these contemporary challenges, like UNESCO, URTI wants to use its capacity to mobilize, its expertise and its experience in its areas of competence: public service media, through multidisciplinary and innovative approaches.

URTI will indeed launch innovative actions to address new divides such as growing inequalities, especially in gender, education, extreme poverty, or the effects of climate change on society, the impact of cutting-edge technologies in all areas of life and the digital divide; the rise of racism, exclusionary discourse and forms of discrimination; misinformation and attacks on press freedom; threats to the integrity of cultural heritage; the fragility of support systems for creativity and diversity of cultural expression.

URTI and its members, in their field, are already helping to move towards an inclusive, equitable and sustainable recovery from the impact of the global COVID-19 crisis.

This crisis has highlighted the vulnerabilities of our societies and economies, with asymmetrical impacts, especially on women and youth. In our media sector, artists and cultural professionals, as well as independent media personnel, have found themselves in precarious situations that jeopardize their livelihoods - especially for women, who constitute the majority of temporary workers. The protection and promotion of human rights and freedoms affected by the crisis, the fight against racism, discrimination and the risks of misinformation are all the more important in this context. And our public media are at the forefront of obtaining concrete advances to solve these societal problems!

The COVID-19 crisis has also accelerated the digitization of social interactions and thus reshaped the social and economic fabric. It has generated unprecedented global attention and awareness of the risks and potential consequences of major technological advances - notably the emergence of artificial intelligence - for freedom of expression and creation, access to knowledge and information, respect for equality, and thus for social cohesion. This is where URTI's capacity to mobilize its members and sister associations for concrete actions on the ground is most useful, and is underway in our national public media, and in sister continental associations. This capacity to mobilize is at the heart of our renewed partnership with UNESCO.

Moreover, the two global priorities of UNESCO - Africa and Gender Equality - have already been met by URTI and its sister associations in a project to raise awareness of the gender issue among African public media. The EBU has started innovative actions in this field in Europe, the ABU has relayed the action in Asia-Pacific, and URTI is launching the project for Africa.

It is this concrete partnership model that URTI wants to put forward for the coming strategic period, by the year 2030.