

## Director General Irina Bokova at the Crans Montana African Women's Forum on the role of women in global security



*On 27 October 2017, UNESCO Director General Irina Bokova addressed the Plenary Session of the Crans Montana African Women's Forum at the European Parliament in Brussels.*

Established as a forum for discussion and sharing of experience among women, to empower them to claim their essential role in the African progress, the Crans Montana African Women's Forum organized – within the framework of the Homeland and Global Security Forum - a panel discussion on women's role in global security.

Director-General chaired, together with MEP Gilles Pargneaux, the panel about the crucial role of women in fighting youth radicalization and uncontrolled emigration. Moderated by Lady Ngo Mang Epesse, President of the Women Environmental Covenant, the panel featured two special guests, Mrs. Bernadette Razaiarisoa Mahafaly, spouse of the Prime Minister of Madagascar, and Mrs. Haibouha Zoubeir, Deputy Chairman at the Phosboucrââ Foundation in Morocco, and included HRH Princess Sanyogita Atrey, Chairperson & Managing Director of SG18 Realty in India, Mrs. Eunide Innocent, Minister for Women's Affairs and Women's rights in Haiti and Mrs. Myrieme Churchill, Executive Director of Parents for Peace as panelists.

In her intervention, DG Bokova stressed the importance of encouraging research on the impacts of violent extremism on girls and women in order to formulate policies suitable for the challenge. "Education is the best way to disarm processes that can lead to violent extremism" she stated, remarking UNESCO'S deep commitment to and efforts in empowering girls and women not only through education, but also through freedom of expression and actions for youth engagement. In conclusion, Director General recalled that UNESCO is also involved in many projects of capacity building and awareness raising, with the firm belief that "empowered girls and women are the strongest defenses of reconciliation and peace".