UN Declares 2015 the International Year of Light
IEEE Photonics Society and others join initiative to support importance of light-based technologies

The United Nations (UN) General Assembly and The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) have proclaimed 2015 as the International Year of Light and Light-based Technologies (IYL2015). Light is an essential part of culture and art and is a unifying symbol for the world. A hundred-plus organizations, such as the IEEE Photonics Society (IPS), from more than 85 different countries have joined the initiative to signify the importance of light science and the essential role it plays in communication, education, politics, and medicine.

"We in the IEEE Photonics Society are extremely excited to be a part of the IYL. Not only does it present a chance for us to partner with our sister societies around the globe to showcase the impact the light sciences have on nearly every aspect of modern life, it’s also an opportunity for IPS and its thousands of members to demonstrate the critical role we play in this space,” stated Christopher Jannuzzi, Interim Executive Director of IEEE Photonics Society and Executive Director of IEEE Electron Devices Society.

The IYL2015 purpose is to raise awareness about how light-based technologies directly respond to the needs of humankind by providing access to information, promoting sustainable development, and increasing well-being and standard of living. Perfect examples include the awareness of the inexpensive solar-powered solid-state lighting that has replaced toxic kerosene for indoor use in some developing regions, remote sensing from space that tracks crop health, major storms, and underground water sources, and non-invasive screening of infants for life-threatening breathing or digestive conditions.

John Dudley, Chairman of the IYL 2015 Steering Committee, states that, "An International Year of Light is a tremendous opportunity to ensure that international policymakers and stakeholders are made aware of the problem-solving potential of light technology."

The IYL2015 Steering Committee, led by Dudley, and other respected societies are coordinating activities for the IYL2015 on national, regional and international levels. Activities will be planned so that people of all ages, backgrounds and from all countries appreciate the central role of light in science and culture, and as a cross-cutting scientific discipline that can advance sustainable development.

National and regional committees will ensure nations from the around the world can participate. For more information, and to be placed on a mailing list for updates, please contact light@eps.org.

Download the International Year of Light Project Prospectus, here: http://www.eps.org/light2015