



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization

Organisation  
des Nations Unies  
pour l'éducation,  
la science et la culture

Organización  
de las Naciones Unidas  
para la Educación,  
la Ciencia y la Cultura

Организация  
Объединенных Наций по  
вопросам образования,  
науки и культуры

منظمة الأمم المتحدة  
للتربية والعلم والثقافة

联合国教育、  
科学及文化组织

**Address by Irina Bokova,**

**Director-General of UNESCO**

**on the occasion of the designation ceremony of Mr Kudsi Ergüner**

**Istanbul, 10 July 2016**

Excellencies Ministers,

Excellencies Ambassadors,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Dear Mr Kudsi Ergüner,

Dear Friends,

It is exceptional that we take the opening ceremony of the World Heritage committee as an opportunity to designate a new *UNESCO Artist for Peace*.

I see this as a powerful symbol of the commitment we share to culture, to art, to unity, to peace.

I wish to thank Mr Kadir Topbaş, Honourable Mayor of Istanbul, and to renew my deep appreciation to the Turkish authorities for their leadership.

Mr Kudsi Ergüner is one of the world's most extraordinary, most outstanding players of *ney*, a Turkish reed flute.

Mr Ergüner, I believe you embody the very notion of Turkish intangible heritage, following a tradition you inherited from your father, Ulvi Ergüner, and your grandfather, Suleyman Ergüner, who both were players of *ney*.

You have deepened your knowledge of Turkish classical music through your studies of Sufi music, and I believe you will make a profound contribution to UNESCO's work to protect and promote intangible heritage and dialogue among cultures.

I must say this holds very special meaning to me.

As Director-General of UNESCO, I have designated many musicians, from jazz players to traditional musicians, as UNESCO Artists for Peace -- because I believe music is an art deeply rooted in the heart and traditions of the peoples, and, at the same time, music is always evolving, constantly renewing itself.

This is the beauty of music — it touches us each individually, and it brings us together as a single community, sharing emotions, aspirations, dreams and values.

As early as in 1980, Kudsi Ergüner conducted research in Turkey thanks to a grant from UNESCO.

Mr Ergüner, you founded in Paris the *Mavlani Institute* for the study of classical Sufi music and teachings.

Later you formed a band, the *Kudsi Erguner Ensemble*, to preserve the classical music of the 16<sup>th</sup> century Ottoman Empire.

Your life and work have been guided by a profound passion to bring the past to life, to share the wisdom and beauty of traditions, to pass their messages of peace and dialogue to current and future generations, to share the depth of Mevlevi Sufi music, building on Persian and Turkish traditions, mixing this with poetry, literature and living arts across the region.

This is the power of music to travel and enlighten.

This is the power of music to bring people together around shared values.

As a *UNESCO Artist for Peace*, you join other musical champions like Jean Michel Jarre, a friend of yours, Jordi Savall, Herbie Hancock, Marcus Miller, Theodosii Spassov...

Each of them is deeply committed to promoting human rights and dignity through music, to advancing UNESCO's ideals and objectives, along with such fellow ambassadors, as Forest Whitaker, *UNESCO Special Envoy for Peace and Reconciliation*, Serge and Beate Klarsfeld, *Honorary Ambassadors and Special Envoys for Holocaust Education and the Prevention of Genocide*.

Every new designation makes the UNESCO family stronger, richer and more committed.

In this spirit, Mr. Kudsi Ergüner, I am honoured to designate you as *UNESCO Artist for Peace*.

Thank you.