



## POINTS TO MAKE

Deputy Prime Minister | Minister of Foreign & European Affairs of the Slovak Republic

H. E. Miroslav LAJČÁK

### UNESCO Leaders' Forum 2015

38<sup>th</sup> Session of the UNESCO General Conference

November 17, 2015 | Tuesday

Paris | France

Spracoval: M. Wlachovský z myšlienok A. Füle, I. Grexu, K. Novotnej, M. Mlynára, D. Frelichovej, M. Eštoka

Upravil a doplnil: lb

*Monsieur le Président, Madame la Directrice générale, honorables délégués, Mesdames et Messieurs...*

La **France** - berceau des valeurs **démocratiques**, de droit de **l'homme**, de la **liberté**, de la **culture** a été *de nouveau brutalement attaquée*. Permettez-moi d'exprimer mes **condoléances** les plus **sincères** aux proches des **victimes** et des **blessés**. En ce moment tragique notre **pensée**, **soutien** et **solidarité** appartiennent à l'**audacieux** peuple français. *Nous sommes tous Paris!...*

*Brutal and barbaric terrorist acts* against **defenceless civilians** deserve our **total condemnation**. This is inhumane and against any religious beliefs. When some of the witnesses described what happened at the Bataclan theatre, they said the terrorists had behaved like machines. Yes, because they lost their souls, their humanity! Without them, we can turn to machines. Terrorists all around the world – in Paris, Beirut or Kenya – are inhuman machines regardless their motivation or ideology. They are simply killers, enemies of mankind. Their way brings no solution, just death.

Our **immediate spontaneous reaction** must be *resolve and unity*. *Defense* of our **values** and **way of life**. What is of the essence - is **not** to allow the terrorists to **form our agenda**! They declared themselves faithful to Islam. They want to **force upon** us their **perverse version** of one of the **great world religions** - **Islam**. We all know it is a shameful lie. They represent no religion. We will not allow them to bring the fight to the people of different faiths, hatred based on religion, race or ethnicity. His Holiness Pope Francis has said in his reaction to Friday's tragic events in Paris: "the road of violence and hatred does not resolve humanity's problems and using the name of God to justify this road is blasphemy".

We in Europe are proud of our historic heritage including Ancient Greek and Roman philosophy. We should remember and occasionally remind ourselves that during the Middle Ages, Greek ideas were largely forgotten in Western Europe. They re-entered the West through translations from Arabic to Latin thanks to Islamic philosophers such as Al-Kindi (Alkindus), Al-Farabi (Alpharabius), Ibn Sina (Avicenna) and Ibn Rushd (Averroes). The re-introduction of these philosophies, accompanied by the new Arabic commentaries, had a great influence on medieval philosophers such as Thomas Aquinas. That has been a real contribution of Islam to Europe. We need more Islamic philosophers and scientists and less hate preachers.

*Mr. President,*

UNESCO is playing and will continue playing a key role in creating the world where there is no space for terrorists. We have gathered here today to **share** our views about its **future**. No terrorist can change that. Our organisation celebrates its 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary. We are going to **take stock** of our **efforts so far**. But most importantly, to help create a **vision** for **future UNESCO**. The one that is **better equipped** to deal with the global threats and **challenges**. Their scale is **unprecedented**, including **violent extremism** and **international terrorism...**

2

*Mr. President,*

When UNESCO was created **70** years **ago**, it was a **response** to the **shock** and **moral crisis** triggered by **World War II**. Lessons learned from its **atrocities** called for the **establishment** of the *universal platform for dialogue*. To **assist states** in **co-operating** and **promoting** education, culture and science. And to **safeguard** our **common heritage** for the **benefit** of the **nations**. Hence this idea has been **firmly rooted** as a **main objective** of UNESCO in **Article 1** of its **Constitution...**

*Education, culture, science, communication and information* are genuine **parts** of our **lives**. **Wherever** we live and **whatever** we **do**. **Human beings** can't simply exist **without them**. They **contribute** to the **satisfaction** of our **material** and **mental needs**, **interests** and **aspirations**. They are **tools** enriching the **welfare** of the entire **humankind**. But, unfortunately, they also are **abused** for the **promotion** of **false ideas** and **vicious ideologies of terror...**

As our response to recent wave of terror the **need** to define a *new humanism* is **relevant** more than ever. It should be **bringing nations** and **people back together** through education, culture, science and communication. We have to **refresh** the **spirit** of **London** of **1945** and **adapt** it to the **present** world, its **needs** and **challenges**. UNESCO is a huge **laboratory of thoughts**. Let's together make a **better use of it** for the **creation** of a **new humanism** further reflected in a **new multilateralism...**

3

I **fully agree** with Madam Director General **Irina Bokova**. She calls for a **return** to the *original meaning of culture*. From the very **beginning** of her **tenure** she **wanted** it to be **accepted** by all of **humanity**. Because we see it **matters**. There can be no **lasting peace** and **global prosperity** without the **intellectual** and **moral cooperation** among the nations...

*Mr. President,*

We are **utterly devoted** to the *Universality of UNESCO*. In our understanding, we deem it a **capability to act together** in a **concerted manner** at the **worldwide level**. But it is a **political category** rather than an **arithmetic** one. We have a **joint responsibility** to ensure that UNESCO further enhances its capacities for **effective global action**. Today it is **more required** than ever...

En parlant de l'UNESCO, on **utilise** souvent le mot **valeurs**. Dans ce **contexte**, j'ai surtout envie d'évoquer les *valeurs qui ne sont pas cotés en Bourse*. Et de **répéter** avec **René Maheu** (6. GR UNESCO): „*L'essentiel de la mission de l'UNESCO n'est pas d'ordre technique; il est éthique*“. En affrontant les **difficultés**, l'UNESCO doit **rester fidèle** à sa **mission éthique**...

Dans toute *organisation internationale à vocation universelle*, il existe toujours des **dossiers** qui **causent** des **divisions** entre les **États**. Les **désaccords** sont **naturels** et **inévitables**. Ils sont également **très utiles** et, à **long terme**, ils **renforcent** notre **capacité à délibérer** sérieusement. Mais aussi à **respecter** nos **différences** et à **trouver** ensemble les **meilleures solutions**...

4

Nous devons être bien **conscients** que les *organisations intergouvernementales ne sont pas éternelles*. Elles **font partie** et sont le **résultat** d'un **processus d'évolution**. Leur **espace vital** s'annonce **plus darwinien que jamais**. Elles sont parfois **gourmandes**, **égocentriques** et déjà **trop nombreuses**. Seules les plus **aptés subsisteront**. La capacité de **réinventer** et de **s'ajuster** au nouvel **environnement** et aux nouveaux **défis** est **essentielle**...

*Mr. President,*

We need UNESCO more than ever. It should **play** an even *more significant role in addressing the present-day threats*. It has to continue its efforts to **eradicate illiteracy** and **poverty**. **Stand up** against escalating **conflicts** and rising violent **extremism**. And resolutely **reject** barbaric **attacks** and savage **destruction** of precious **cultural heritage**. They serve as the common **spiritual identity** of all of us...

The current *threats to international peace and security* have never been more **complex**. The increasing danger posed by **terrorist and extremist groups** requires a global response. We must **face up** twisted philosophies of **ISIL, Al Qaeda, Al Shabaab, Boko Haram** and others. There is no alternative to **combating** them **upfront**. Because it is our obligation to **protect** and **preserve** priceless human **heritage** for many **generations to come**...

5

We thus fully **supports** the *Unite4Heritage campaign*. We encourage all Member States to **protect past legacy** where it is **threatened by extremists** also by offering **voluntary contributions** to the **Emergency Fund** and the **Fund of the Second Protocol of the Hague Convention**. **On our part, we are ready to do it...**

The efforts to **extend** the mandate of the *UN peacekeeping missions to culture* go in the **right** direction. Because culture has been **identified** by the UN Security Council as a major **component** of **global security**. And it is now generally **regarded** as one of the **key elements of global peace...**

**2015** is a **crucial** year to **put in place** a truly integrated *sustainable global agenda*. It embraces **all nations** and tackles **all aspects** of human existence. And UNESCO agenda has so **much to offer** in this respect. Because it directly copes with **poverty, healthcare and education**. But it also deals with **climate, culture, science, communication and information...**

*Climate change* is a truly **defining issue** of our time. **Bold action** is **needed** today to reduce **emissions** and build **resilience**. Paris will soon host the ground-breaking **Conference on Climate Change**. Slovakia will **take part** in it **fully supporting** Paris and France as its **hosts**. UNESCO is in an **extraordinary position** to have its say, too. It can **address** climate change exactly taking advantage of its **multidisciplinary mandate...**

The newly adopted *Education 2030 Framework for Action* is a **milestone**. It aims to improve and promote **inclusive and high quality education**. By taking into account sustainable **development, human rights and global citizenship**. **Inclusive education** respecting **gender**

6

**equality** is a **key element** for building a **sustainable, tolerant and inclusive** society. The **youth** shall be **provided** with necessary **competencies** and the **ability** to use them. And thus to contribute to **building and shaping** the **societies** they live in...

We live in an era of an *unprecedented dissemination of information*. People often **struggle** to **attach value** to them or **hesitate** how to **utilize** them **correctly**. We need **quality education** institutions where people can learn **critical thinking**. To understand and appreciate our **cultural and historical heritage**, the fundamental values of **freedom, democracy and tolerance**. **Education** is **crucial** to our **progress and sustainability**. But it also significantly helps **guide us** to **peace and stability** and in the end our **civilized future...**

The suffering of *migrants, refugees and asylum seekers* calls for **concerted** efforts, **multidimensional** approach and **long-term** strategies. The **elimination of root causes** rather than dealing with **consequences** only is a **must**. UNESCO's "*Management of Social Transformation*" **program** has good capacity to **focus** on all such **urgent implications...**

We will also continue **supporting** efforts to *mainstream human rights* across the UNESCO agenda. We remain committed to the **promotion** of **gender equality, empowering of women and girls**. We will strive to **eliminate** all forms of **discrimination** against **women and girls**. And encourage **equal access to education and employment**. Our strong **opposition** to all forms of **racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and intolerance** is **unwavering...**

7

*Science is what drives our lives to an ever more advanced level.* There is a must to **invest** more in **research**. We have to **attract** especially **young people** who should **devote** themselves to **science**. And make **use** of their **talent** to **contribute to the well-being** of future generations. Finally, *the relevance of communication and information is truly unique.* UNESCO's role in promoting universal **respect** for **justice**, the **rule of law**, **human rights** and **fundamental freedoms** is **irreplaceable**. Specifically the **press freedom** and **freedom of expression** need to be **reinforced**. But **the safety of journalists** world-wide is **worrying**. Slovakia therefore acts along with the **international community** on this front. We **back** global efforts to **end impunity** for **crimes** against **journalists**...

*Mr. President,*

Before concluding, I will come **back once more** to the **vision of UNESCO** as we see it. We **need** to have a *UNESCO for all*. This formula very well **embodies** what we want to achieve, because we founded this organization with a vision to serve us all.

*Thank you!*