

**Remarks to be delivered by Ambassador Crystal Nix-Hines
Leaders' Forum
Tuesday, November 17, 2015**

Mr. President of the General Conference, Madam Director General, Excellencies,

I have been asked to share with you a statement from President Obama, in light of the tragic events that took place here in Paris Friday evening.

I also saw Secretary Kerry earlier today in Paris at our Embassy and he expressed again his commitment to advancing the support of the United States for UNESCO's important work at this critical time.

Secretary Kerry talked to an audience at the U.S. Embassy about the need to not only stop the immediate threat but to stem the flow of new recruits "... by providing those other options – by reaching them before they're radicalized; by getting people to see there is better governance, there are better opportunities. And globally, we have a lot of work to do that."

As you know, President Obama earlier this year in Washington. organized a Summit on Countering Violent Extremism. He hosted another Leaders Forum in New York along the margins of the UN General Assembly in September, and Director General Bokova spoke eloquently on the work being done to enhance this Organization's mandate to promote Global Citizenship, specifically using education as a tool to prevent violent extremism.

Secretary Kerry and Deputy Secretary Blinken just announced a new public-private partnership with UNESCO and other partners to develop state-of-the-art training materials to deter impressionable youth from violent extremism - a need painfully highlighted by the horrific attacks here.

Many of you have embraced UNESCO's leadership in this area during the latest Executive Board and this General Conference, as one way that we can collectively advance the mandate of UNESCO to build peace in the minds of men and women.

I have the privilege of sharing the following message from President Obama:

Once again, we've seen an outrageous attempt to terrorize innocent civilians. This is an attack not just on Paris, it's an attack not just on the people of France, but this is an attack on all of humanity and the universal values that we share.

This is a heartbreaking situation. And obviously those of us here in the United States know what it's like. We've gone through these kinds of episodes ourselves.

Paris itself represents the timeless values of human progress. Those who think that they can terrorize the people of France or the values that they stand for are wrong. The American people draw strength from the French people's commitment to life, liberty, the pursuit of happiness. We are reminded in this time of tragedy that the bonds of liberté and égalité and fraternité are not only values that the French people care so deeply about, but they are values that we share. And those values are going to endure far beyond any act of terrorism or the hateful vision of those who perpetrated the crimes Friday evening.

Thank you for UNESCO's unwavering commitment to building peace and tolerance around the world.

In closing, I note that like many of you, and especially our French friends, we suffered casualties from the attack. Four Americans were killed, including a young student, Nohemi Gonzalez, who, like many other young people, had come to Paris to expand her horizons and enrich her education. Sadly, as Secretary Kerry said, we don't have the power to bring these young people back. "So we must do instead what is in our power. And that begins with a sense of fierce solidarity among good and decent people everywhere, with the vow that we will never be intimidated by terrorists," and "will fight to ensure that the world that our children inherit is richer in love and shorter on hate." That is the peacebuilding work of UNESCO the United States Government affirms today.

Thank you. Merci Beaucoup