



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,  
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منظمة الأمم المتحدة  
للتربية والعلم والثقافة

联合国教育、  
科学及文化组织

**Address by Alfredo Pérez de Armiñán,  
Assistant Director-General for Culture of UNESCO,  
on the occasion of Sudan Gala Show**

**UNESCO, 2 June 2015**

Excellency Mr Nasreldin Ahmed Wali, Ambassador Extraordinary and plenipotentiary of Sudan in France,

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentleman,

On behalf of the UNESCO Director-General, Ms Irina Bokova, I am honoured to welcome you all to UNESCO.

UNESCO is the House of all nations – this evening, we are the House of Sudan.

This Sudanese Gala Show is held in a symbolic year for UNESCO, when we celebrate the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Organisation.

This is also a turning point year, when the international community is coming together to shape a new global sustainable development agenda.

Culture – protecting and promoting cultural heritage, cultural diversity and creativity, on the basis of human rights and equal dignity – these goals stand at the heart of UNESCO's mandate, and they must be at the core of the new global agenda.

I wish to thank the Permanent Delegation of Sudan for this initiative to celebrate Sudan's cultural heritage as a strength for all of us to share.

This Gala, as well as the comedy play, provides unique insight to the rich cultural diversity of Sudan.

Presented by the singer, Ms Samira Dunia, accompanied by four musicians, followed by a poem pronounced by the famous Sudanese poet, Ms Rodha Al Haj – all of this testifies to the importance of culture for the society of Sudan, for all societies, at a time when the world is undergoing rapid and turbulent change.

In these turbulent times, culture is a force for human dignity, strengthening ownership, empowering individuals and communities.

Culture is a force for dialogue, shining a light on the way to peace.

Culture is a force for creativity and innovation, the cornerstone of innovation and human development.

There is a wonderful Sudanese proverb that says:

*We desire to bequest two things to our children -- the first one is roots; the other one is wings.*

I believe this expresses perfectly the role of culture for generations today and tomorrow – in forging identities, in providing a sense of belonging, in acting as an enabler for development, to build a better future for all.

Mesdames et Messieurs,

Le patrimoine porte nos valeurs, nos identités et favorise l'échange de connaissances et le vivre ensemble.

Le patrimoine ouvre une importante voie pour dialoguer autour de valeurs partagées, pour fortifier le sentiment de notre humanité commune, comme une seule famille.

A l'heure où le patrimoine culturel est menacé, par les ravages de l'extrémisme, par les négligences et les forces de l'oubli, nous devons lutter ensemble pour faire vivre nos traditions, notre histoire et nos cultures.

Cette grande soirée culturelle est un rappel de la mission fondamentale de l'UNESCO pour la paix, et pour toutes ces raisons, je remercie encore le gouvernement du Soudan pour cette initiative.

Je vous remercie.