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Message from Ms Irina Bokova,

Director-General of UNESCO

on the occasion of the World Day of Audiovisual Heritage

27 October 2016

World Day for Audiovisual Heritage is an opportunity to celebrate the importance of this heritage for all women and men and all societies.

October 27 marks the day in 1980 when the UNESCO General Conference adopted the *Recommendation for the Safeguarding and Preservation of Moving Images* – this is the first international instrument on the cultural and historical importance of film and television recordings, calling for decisive steps for their preservation.

It is your story – don't lose it.

This is our theme this year.

Moving images, with sound recordings, are important records of our lives, holding much of our personal and social memory, essential to identity and belonging. This is why they must be preserved and shared as part of our common heritage. The stories told by this heritage are powerful expressions of culture and place, weaving together personal and collective experience, reflecting the search for meaning shared by all. This heritage provides an anchor in a world of change, especially for local communities, providing records of cultural activities, reflecting the great diversity of expressions. Promoting cohesion, archives are also integral to debates about future priorities, by preserving the diversity of stories and helping future generations understand what came before them.

Archives are humanity's collective memory bank, maintained in many public and private organizations. Especially in remote areas, they are in desperate need of

preservation. In this spirit, I call upon the archival profession, public and private organizations, and all relevant actors, to take urgent action to safeguard audiovisual works and records as an integral part of our shared heritage.