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منظمة الأمم المتحدة  
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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 Remembering of Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali**

**UNESCO, 17 October 2016**

Madame Boutros-Ghali, chère Leia, nous sommes honorés de votre présence,

Excellency Mr Ehab Badawy, Ambassador and Permanent Delegate of the Arab Republic of Egypt to UNESCO,

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am honoured to be here with you today to pay tribute to the memory of Mr Boutros Boutros-Ghali, former United Nations Secretary General and a very close friend of UNESCO.

I wish to pay tribute first and foremost to a man who was a true humanist, who believed profoundly in the inherent rights and dignity of every woman and man.

I wish to pay tribute to a man who was a formidable diplomat and a sharp intellectual.

I wish to pay tribute to a man who worked tirelessly to advocate for dialogue and cooperation, human rights and cultural diversity.

I wish to pay tribute to a man who always listened to and spoke for the most disadvantaged members of humanity.

In his life, in his work, Boutros Boutros-Ghali embodied the values of a true global citizen, and I am deeply moved now, as I can still see him walking in UNESCO's corridors, sharing ideas and working with colleagues, coming so often to my office.

I can still hear the melody of his voice when he spoke in this very room, a few months ago, on issues of migration, addressing UNESCO Member States on the vital need for dialogue and tolerance, and trust in the power of cooperation.

It seems to me his spirit is still here today.

Born in Cairo, he studied in Europe and he carried in his soul the spirit of diversity, as a bridge between peoples and cultures.

He considered diversity to be a mark of a healthy democracy and advocated relentlessly for religious, linguistic and cultural pluralism.

I am convinced he was inspired by the diversity of Egyptian culture, one of the most ancient civilizations in the world, which is an open book on the cultural diversity of this world.

This is the spirit he brought to the United Nations, as the first Secretary-General of the United Nations from an African and Arab country.

He was an innovative thinker, and against the backdrop of the violent breakup of Yugoslavia, he formulated a new *Agenda for Peace*, which expanded the focus on peacekeeping to embrace preventive diplomacy, and post-conflict peacebuilding.

Aware of the inextricable link between peace, democracy and development, he complemented this agenda with an *Agenda for Development* and an *Agenda for Democratization*.

This vision continues to influence reforms today.

A respected statesman in the service of Egypt, he left an indelible imprint on the history of this region, in the name of peace and dialogue.

We need his message more than ever today, to restore trust, confidence and dialogue.

The life and work of Boutros Boutros-Ghali are a boundless source of inspiration, and I am sure all distinguished speakers today will help us promote the ideals of justice and equality he embodied.

Mesdames et Messieurs,

Le programme de cette soirée résume à lui seul l'extraordinaire palette des talents de Boutros Boutros-Ghali.

Je retiens, pour ma part, l'immense générosité d'un homme qui est resté, jusqu'au dernier moment, actif, passionné, soucieux de transmettre son expérience, sa lecture subtile de l'actualité.

Je retiens la profonde humilité d'un homme conscient que l'on ne s'appartient pas totalement lorsqu'on a eu un parcours comme le sien et qu'il faut partager ce que l'on a vu.

Il était Vice-Président du Forum permanent pour le dialogue arabo-africain sur la démocratie et les droits humains.

Il présidait le Panel international pour la démocratie et le développement, instauré par l'UNESCO.

Il était aussi Président d'honneur de l'Association internationale des Amis des Musées Egyptiens.

Il acceptait chaque fois ces charges avec gentillesse, avec humilité, comme une façon de rendre ce qu'il avait reçu, et cela compte aussi beaucoup, dans la diplomatie.

Boutros Boutros-Ghali incarnait tout cela.

Il l'avait démontré comme premier secrétaire général de la Francophonie, lançant par là-même un immense mouvement pour la diversité culturelle, dont l'UNESCO a également bénéficié.

Il fut, Mesdames et Messieurs, un grand ami de l'UNESCO, engagé dans de nombreux forums de discussions, amoureux du débat.

Partager, discuter, il n'y avait pas de plus belle manière de lui rendre hommage.

Je vous remercie.