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Message from Ms Irina Bokova,

Director-General of UNESCO

on the occasion of 100th anniversary of Centennial Hall in Wroclaw

Wroclaw, Poland, May 2013

I am pleased to send heartfelt greetings and congratulations to all participants in the festivities celebrating the 100th anniversary of the Centennial Hall of Wroclaw. Inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List in 2006, the Hall embodies the notion of “*outstanding universal value*” that lies at the heart of the World Heritage Convention.

Built by Max Berg in 1911-1913, the Centennial Hall is a jewel in the history of architecture and design in the 20th century. This is a stunning and pioneering work of modern engineering that has become a reference in the evolution of reinforced concrete architecture. It is also an exceptional example of a multi-purpose and recreational building. The Centennial Hall has always provided a unique exhibition space for the diverse and multicultural city of Wroclaw, hosting a wide array of fairs, concerts and events, including the 1948 *World Congress of Intellectuals in the Defence of Peace*.

The Centennial Hall expresses the core idea guiding UNESCO's efforts to safeguard humanity's common heritage – embodying the wealth of diversity and creativity, we need to protect this heritage as a source of strength and belonging, today and tomorrow. This is a foundation for lasting peace and sustainable development in a world that is uncertain and changing quickly. The 1972 World Heritage Convention seeks to instil pride and respect in each of us not only for our own history but for the heritage of all other cultures, as the basis for dialogue and mutual understanding. Safeguarding our common heritage is a shared responsibility that requires cooperation between all States Parties, along with civil society, local

communities and citizens. This is the great innovation in global governance embodied by the World Heritage Convention.

The Government and society of Poland are amongst the strongest champions of UNESCO's work to safeguard and promote the shared cultural and natural heritage of humanity -- on Polish territory and across the world, for the benefit of current and future generations.

I thank Poland for this engagement, and I wish you a wonderful celebration of the 100th anniversary of the Centennial Hall of Wroclaw.

Irina Bokova