



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,  
науки и культуры

منظمة الأمم المتحدة  
للتربية والعلم والثقافة

联合国教育、  
科学及文化组织

**Address by Irina Bokova,**

**Director-General of UNESCO**

**on the occasion of congratulations to H.E Michael Worbs, Ambassador  
and Permanent Delegate of Germany to UNESCO, for his election as  
Chairperson of the Executive Board**

**UNESCO, 20 November 2015**

Mr President,

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I wish to congratulate His Excellency Michael Worbs, Ambassador and Permanent Delegate of Germany to UNESCO, for his election as Chairperson of the Executive Board.

I believe this election reflects the deep commitment that you have brought to UNESCO and the leadership that you have shown in taking forward the Organisation's objectives.

This was embodied in the *5th International Conference of Ministers and Senior Officials Responsible for Physical Education and Sport (MINEPS V)*, held in Berlin in May, 2013, opened by Her Excellency Ms Angela Merkel, Federal Chancellor of Germany.

MINEPS V revitalized a key area of UNESCO's action to harness the power of sport for inclusion, to counter racism and discrimination, to advance gender equality, to engage all young women and men.

This was embodied also during the first meeting of the Scientific Advisory Board to the UN Secretary General, in Berlin last year – this was a huge step to strengthen

the science-policy interface, and it is not a surprise that Germany took the lead on this.

This was reflected, more recently, in the 39<sup>th</sup> Session of the World Heritage Committee that was held in Bonn last June, chaired by Excellency Professor Maria Böhmer, as well as through our cooperation with many institutions and museums in Germany, such as the Pergamum Museum in Berlin.

This takes place at a time when cultural heritage and diversity face rising attacks, and it provided the platform for the launch of the *Global Coalition for the Protection of Cultural Heritage*, to raise visibility and strengthen coordination in responding to cultural cleansing.

Monsieur le Président,

Vous apportez l'expérience d'une longue carrière au service de la diplomatie et de la coopération internationale, dans les affaires économiques et culturelles, sur les sujets de communication et de médias.

Dans cette enceinte, vous avez souvent partagé votre vision et vos efforts pour renforcer l'Organisation et approfondir sa réforme, et votre élection aujourd'hui en porte le témoignage.

Je m'arrête là et je ne vais pas dresser votre portrait, car vous le savez mieux que moi : Johann Wolfgang von Goethe disait que « *l'on est jamais satisfait du portrait d'une personne que l'on connaît bien* », et j'ose dire que nous nous connaissons.

Nous avons travaillé ensemble, sur de nombreux dossiers, et je me réjouis de cette occasion de renforcer notre collaboration plus avant, pour atteindre les objectifs de cette Organisation, pour mettre en œuvre l'Agenda 2030, et contribuer à construire ensemble les défenses de la paix.

Merci.