



DÉLÉGATION PERMANENTE DU PORTUGAL AUPRÈS DE L'UNESCO

**GROUPE ÉLECTORAL I / ELECTORAL GROUP I  
2017**

**Tribute to Madame Irina Bokova**

*Paris, 10 November 2017*

**Ambassador José Filipe Moraes Cabral  
Chairperson of Electoral Group 1**

Madame la Directrice-Générale, chère Irina Bokova,

Ce n'est pas sans tristesse que nous vous disons au-revoir.

Pendant les dernières huit années vous avez guidé notre organisation à travers une période particulièrement difficile de la vie de l'UNESCO.

Pendant cette période, vous avez été une présence constante à nos côtés, bataillant contre des adversités de tout genre.

Vous avez toujours cherché à renforcer la cohésion entre nous tous, à souligner le caractère commun et partagé des objectifs que nous poursuivons et la solidarité qui doit nous unir dans cette poursuite.

Vous avez toujours été accessible, toujours attentive aux différentes suggestions et aux divers points de vue, dans la recherche inlassable des meilleurs chemins pour atteindre nos buts communs.

Vous avez défendu l'UNESCO et son rôle en tant que pièce fondamentale du système multilatéral, avec détermination et avec courage.



DÉLÉGATION PERMANENTE DU PORTUGAL AUPRÈS DE L'UNESCO

GROUPE ÉLECTORAL I / ELECTORAL GROUP I  
**2017**

You have always reaffirmed your values and objectives.

You have consistently recalled that, like at its creation, UNESCO remained an indispensable instrument for the promotion of economic, social and human development, a decisive lever for progress which no one should be excluded from.

You have always valued the role of UNESCO as a space for dialogue, exchange, mutual respect, open discussion and enriching mutualism.

In sum, you have placed the central role of UNESCO in the demanding paths of peace and a better, more just and equitable world.

For all this, we are profoundly grateful.

Dear Irina,

These have been indeed challenging times for UNESCO. We have been faced with seemingly unsurmountable adversities of different nature and scope, and not just financial ones.

Your conviction and determination were indispensable throughout these years to steady our course among these difficulties, many of which, unfortunately, still hinder our path.



DÉLÉGATION PERMANENTE DU PORTUGAL AUPRÈS DE L'UNESCO

GROUPE ÉLECTORAL I / ELECTORAL GROUP I

**2017**

I trust that you found in Group 1 and its Members the understanding and the support you required to further your objectives at the helm of our organization.

As Member States, it is our collective duty to uphold and pursue the principles, values and aims of the Charter of the United Nations and of the Constitution of UNESCO.

Only thus will we be faithful to our mandate, contributing to peace and stability, to promoting prosperity for all and to further dialogue, inclusion, mutual respect and solidarity.

We live in a quickly changing World to which our Organization must constantly adapt itself.

Only thus will it be able to face the many challenges with which it is confronted in a successful way, and to play its role as an essential instrument of an efficient multilateralism.

UNESCO must become more efficient, more transparent and more accountable. It must constantly assert its credibility, putting its know-how and expertise at the service of the objectives laid out in its Constitution and meeting the expectations that rightly lie with it.

We will adopt in this session of the General Conference a new programmatic framework for the next four years.

In preparing this document, we were all motivated by the belief that our organization has to occupy a new centrality in the international system.



DÉLÉGATION PERMANENTE DU PORTUGAL AUPRÈS DE L'UNESCO

GROUPE ÉLECTORAL I / ELECTORAL GROUP I  
**2017**

Indeed, the role and relevance of UNESCO remain as valid today as it was in 1946, in addressing the old and the new challenges the World is faced with.

With your wise guidance, dear Irina, as with your firm commitment to the principles and values of UNESCO, and, if I may say so, your shrewd instinct, we have succeeded in maintaining our organization afloat, which was no meager achievement during these past years.

But we have managed more. I believe that we have managed, collectively, to sow the seeds of a more efficient, coherent and credible future for UNESCO and I do hope that we can carry on working in this direction with a strong sense of common purpose.

Nevertheless, turbulence and uncertainty are still with us.

The best way to face them, as you have shown us, is by constantly upholding UNESCO's essential role in fostering Education and Scientific Knowledge, in defending our cultural heritage, in promoting dialogue and mutual respect and understanding, in upholding fundamental human rights, in sharing information.

In this sense, the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development is our main instrument to combat inequality and poverty, and to promote economic, social and human development, fulfilling the noble aims that are at the heart of UNESCO's existence.



DÉLÉGATION PERMANENTE DU PORTUGAL AUPRÈS DE L'UNESCO

**GROUPE ÉLECTORAL I / ELECTORAL GROUP I  
2017**

Madame la Directrice-Générale, très chère Irina,

Je termine en vous disant, au nom du Groupe 1 et en mon nom personnel, combien nous vous sommes reconnaissants de tout ce que vous avez fait pour l'UNESCO.

Nous vous remercions chaleureusement de votre dévouement à notre organisation et à votre engagement sans faille dans la poursuite de ses objectifs.

Je vous exprime, avec amitié, nos meilleurs vœux pour votre avenir personnel.

Mais je veux aussi vous dire que je suis sûr que nous pourrons, à l'UNESCO, compter toujours sur votre expérience et vos conseils avisés.

Le Monde en a besoin.

Merci beaucoup

-----