



Intergovernmental meeting of experts  
on the preliminary draft convention  
on the protection of the diversity of cultural contents  
and artistic expressions

Opening remarks by  
Ambassador Hans-Heinrich Wrede  
Chairman of the Executive Board

UNESCO, Paris, 20 September 2004

President of the General Conference,  
Director-General,  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished Experts,  
Dear Colleagues,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

To all of you welcome to Paris, welcome to UNESCO Headquarters

You have come here for a very important, indeed a very ambitious undertaking. Let me express to you, on behalf of the Executive Board, our best wishes for your endeavours in the days to come.

We all are extremely grateful for the work already done with regard to the Convention on Cultural Diversity. We would like to thank especially the Director-General, the Secretariat, and above all, Mme Stenou's brilliant team. Of course, our deep gratitude goes as well to the eminent experts from the 14 countries who worked with so much commitment and professional competence, and we may say now, successfully in three rather intense meetings.

The draft they have agreed upon provides you with an excellent basis for the task ahead of you. In your work you are, above all, guided by the mandate given by the last session of the General Conference (Resolution 32 C/34). I would like to appeal to you to take this very carefully worded, delicately balanced mandate in all its component parts seriously.

Finally, let me express to you my confidence that you will work towards a genuine comprehensive consensus – a consensus that is as inclusive as possible – in a spirit of friendship, trust and openness. Of course, differences of opinion – honest disagreements – are certain to come up. That would be a situation where your negotiation skills are required and your readiness to accept reasonable compromises is indispensable for the eventual success of your deliberations which are certainly going to be clearly result-oriented.

Once more, from the Executive Board, I can assure you of our full support.

Thank you for your attention – BONNE CHANCE!