

**Organización de las Naciones Unidas para la  
Educación, la Ciencia y la Cultura  
UNESCO**

**35ª Conferencia General**

**Discurso de  
Su Excelencia  
José Rafael Lantigua  
Secretario de Estado de Cultura  
República Dominicana  
Jefe de la Delegación Dominicana a la  
35ª Conferencia General de UNESCO**

**París  
7 de octubre de 2009**

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**Mr. President of the General Assembly,  
Your Excellency Davidson Hepburn,**

**Mr. Kochiro Matsuura, Director General of UNESCO,**

**Delegation Chiefs,  
Ministers, Delegates,  
Honorable Ambassadors,  
Ladies and Gentlemen:**

I allow myself to congratulate the President of the General Assembly for his election as President in this 35<sup>th</sup> General Assembly. We salute Mr. Hepburn, who comes from the GRULAC Region, for being the first representative of the CARICOM countries in being elected to this position.

The Dominican Republic finds itself in this General Assembly in a moment of redirection for UNESCO and would like to take advantage of this opportunity to assure our engagement with this Organization's destiny and relevance. Today more than ever, peace and ethics must take the center stage in the debate of the fundamental values of our time, with the world submerged in an economic crisis for over a year, our world leaders' response to said crisis, the frailty of democracy in different regions of the world and the collateral effects of climate change. We understand that this crisis can serve as a boost to the role of our Organization as the critical conscience in the United Nations System.

The Director General finalizes his directorship after 10 years of hard work and in name of my Government I would like to express our recognition of his work at the head of the Organization and of his efforts to give UNESCO a new visibility in order to establish its leadership in the United Nations System. Effort also expressed in UNESCO's physical renovation and the execution of the Belmont Plan. The Dominican Republic supports that, in the 2010-2011 Budget and Program, Africa and gender equality get a privileged position. However, we would also call to attention the great importance to the GRULAC region, and others regions in the world; the programs aimed at today's youth, in particular those in prevention of violence, and the situation with the small Insular States.

For the first time in UNESCO's history a woman is elected Director General. We are talking about an active defender of women rights, once director of INSTRAW in Santo Domingo, reason why her election is especially dear to us. We would like to congratulate Mrs. Irina Bokova, who has before her great challenge, one that we are sure she will successfully face.

Mr. President:

The Dominican Republic acknowledges the vital and transcendent value of UNESCO's strategic objectives; the reinforcement of the contributions of culture, the promotion of intercultural diversity and dialogue. We understand that these concepts engulf the development of social cohesion,

the establishment of a culture of peace and the protection and valorization of a sustainable cultural heritage.

Our country, is a firm believer that UNESCO must reinforce these objectives so that they do not remain simple theoretical enunciations and as conceptual material in treaties, conventions and symposiums.

It is urgent to establish concrete projects that reinforce the contribution of a culture of progress to the peoples, making special emphasis in strengthening the links between education and culture and between economy and culture, as substantial factors of development.

It is equally imperative to support UNESCO national strategies to promote the sustainable management of natural and cultural resources and the promotion of peace and security, all indispensable for development.

The Dominican Government believes that UNESCO should push “alternative and complementary options” for tourism linked to ecological and cultural specifications in particular those linked to the tangible and intangible heritages.

The Dominican Republic celebrates its nomination by UNESCO in the Memories of the World program, the Documentary, Heritage on the Resistance and the fight for Human Rights in our country, presented by the Memorial Museum of Dominican Resistance, that constitute the permanent evidence of the country’s struggle against dictatorship in favor of the democratic liberties and respect for human rights.

We welcome the celebrations of the Bicentennial of the Independence processes of the Latin American and Caribbean Countries as we consider them to constitute a true regional and universal historical landmark that allowed the foundations of the New Republics, the abolition of slavery in the continent, and the inclusion of the black and native communities in the emerging societies.

We thank the drive given by UNESCO to the Slavery Route project, as it allows us to consolidate our multicultural identity and highlights the richness of the African legacy in our region.

In his recent intervention before the General Assembly of the United Nations the President of the Dominican Republic, Dr. Leonel Fernandez, has justly pointed out that it is necessary for international organisms to clearly state a firm renewal of their alignments and activities, taking into account that the world has been changing on all fronts and it is necessary to reconsider directives, objectives and visions to place these organisms at the level demanded by these times. UNESCO is certainly a laboratory of ideas, a normative organism and a cooperation catalyst whose mission is to advance the knowledge, norms and intellectual cooperation to facilitate social transformation; it is a carrier of the universal values of justice, freedom and human dignity.

However it is imperative that this mission be conducted with concrete actions that allow the world to advance in the knowledge of its indentifying reality, valorizing culture,

science and education as fundamental factors of development and to insert these values in the economic and social context demanded by these times.

The investigations and the intellectual concepts must be accompanied by concrete and viable formulae that can guarantee the citizens of the world a correct perception of the cultural reality of their values and reaches.

UNESCO has the inescapable responsibility to respond effectively to social challenges and situations like the socialization of bioethics, the knowledge of the social sciences, the development of effective participatory public policies, the strengthening of the programs preventing juvenile violence, especially in Central America and the Caribbean, the sustained drive against racism, discrimination and xenophobia and fundamentally strengthening the capacity of national planning, execution and management of quality literacy programs.

The Dominican Republic aspires that UNESCO continues its active leadership coordinating, driving and sustaining initiatives supporting the development of education, valorizing scientific knowledge and strengthening culture as a vector of development.

UNESCO must maintain its growing focus on the achievement of education for all by 2015 encouraging with concrete actions the commitments made during the meetings on education that took place in Dakar, Geneva and Oslo, closely observing the repercussions of the economic and financial crisis on the efforts of developing

countries to achieve the objectives of the Education for All program.

Concerning the backing of the International Hydrological Program the Dominican Republic has proposed to create a center in Santo Domingo for the Sustainable Management of Hydrological Resources in the Insular States of the Caribbean under the auspices of UNESCO as a Category 2 Center.

In the same way the Dominican Republic maintains and promotes its proposal to create a Regional Scenic Arts, Cinema, Music and Entertainment Industry Center as an essential instrument to substantially improve the potential development of this sector for the entire Central American and Caribbean region.

Your Excellency:

The Government of the Dominican Republic reassures through me its complete trust in UNESCO as a fundamental instrument to contribute in the development of actions that aim to surpass the current challenges in Education, Science and Culture.

We insist, as we did 2 years ago in this same forum, that UNESCO's contributions be executed through viable formulae surpassing theoretical dimensions to become facts, concrete realizations, of real and sustained support so that the principles from which this Organization originated continue as positive actions in the framework of our national institutions.

As we stand here and observe today's changing world we must transform UNESCO into a more dynamic institution, the Dominican Government firmly believes that this is the basis for UNESCO to once again come out strengthened from this global conjecture embracing the values of cultural diversity and working for a more dignified life for all men and women of our peoples.