Date: 8 January 2015

Object: Message related to the 70th anniversary of the liberation of the Nazi German Concentration and Extermination Camp of Auschwitz-Birkenau.

Sender: H.H. Mr. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser
High Representative for the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations

Dear Ms. Irina Bokova,

Excellencies,

Distinguished Guests,

The United Nations Alliance of Civilizations recognizes the year of 2015 as extremely important for the nations and the people of the world.

This year celebrates the liberation of millions of victims, whose rights and lives were denied seventy years ago. It also celebrates the seventieth anniversary of the United Nations and the ever-growing recognition by a 193 member states of the necessity to preserve international peace, security, human rights, social and economic development.

I will never fail to assert how vital it is today for each man and woman to claim the shared values and rights to life, liberty and dignity. These values, secured by the United Nations Charter in 1945, need to be enshrined in the hearts and minds of the people of this world.

I would like to reassert the commitment of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations to build peace through our shared humanity. I personally engaged in peace building based on religious values while President of the 66th session of the UN General Assembly. As highlighted in my book, A Year at the Helm of the United Nations General Assembly, we held a high-level meeting in September 2011, on the continuing scourge of racism and xenophobia worldwide. This was an opportunity to reaffirm our fight against intolerance and discrimination, and to participate in the Holocaust Remembrance Service alongside Rabbi Schneier in January 2012.

We have to continue our critical work to promote dialogue among different faiths and religions.
Lebanese Poet Khalil Gibran encapsulated the essence of this idea by stating that, "when we turn to one another for counsel we reduce the number of our enemies."

Only by working together, hand in hand, will we succeed in taking action against the negative forces of racism and xenophobia. Only by cultivating world peace through mutual interests for a common future, will we succeed in preventing similar violence from occurring in the future – an essential element understood and advocated by your work at UNESCO.

Please accept my utmost support for the 70th anniversary of the liberation of the Nazi German camp of Auschwitz-Birkenau, as well as my deep respect for taking the lead in condemning one of the most heinous crimes against humanity.

Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser

H.E. Mrs. Irina Bokova
Director General
UNESCO