



باسمہ تعالیٰ

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Madam,

I am writing to you to express my deep appreciation for the three days and one night of philosophy held in UNESCO Headquarters from 16-19 November 2016, in celebration of World Philosophy Day 2016, at which I learned a lot. Ms. Nada Al-Nashif, Assistant Director-General for Social and Human Sciences, and Mr. John Crowley, Chief of the Research, Policy and Foresight Section, have indeed performed very good work in its organization, for which I am most grateful.

The events were notable for their variety, ranging from International Encounters on New Philosophical Practices, a roundtable entitled Speak up Together for Tolerance, a roundtable on Teaching Aristotle, and the launch of the UNESCO Chair on the practice of philosophy with children, to the extraordinary night of philosophy lasting from 7pm to 7 am, which mixed philosophical lectures and debates with concerts, performances and debates.

The night was a wonderful and unique initiative involving a great variety of talks on topics ranging from justice to Buddhist ethics, gender diversity and questions of revolution, freedom and security, as well as on renowned philosophers such as Aristotle, Nietzsche and Kierkegaard and comparative studies. It was a pleasant surprise to find the rooms filled, and indeed to see long queues of youths, despite the fact that this was an event dedicated to the serious subject of philosophy rather than to entertainment. It was a very encouraging sign that the youth welcomed the initiative to this extent, and I felt they truly lent their spirit of enthusiasm and energy to our House. This is in fact the UNESCO we wish to be, and I am sure that many of our ambassadors and colleagues share my view; among them I may refer to H.E. Mr. Lionel Veer, Ambassador and Permanent Delegate of the Netherlands to UNESCO, who as a philosopher himself actively participated in the event. I intend to refer to this topic in my intervention during the spring session of the Executive Board, and I will request that this intellectual image of UNESCO be discussed in the Board and its intersessional meetings.

I am indeed delighted to witness the flourishing of World Philosophy Day, and it is my ardent hope that UNESCO will continue to encourage such events in the future and indeed in the countries of our Member States, as the 2016 edition of World Philosophy Day truly represented an opportunity to engage in dialogue and foster the intellectual and moral solidarity which lies at the heart of UNESCO's lofty mission.

Please accept, Madam, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Cordially

Ahmad Jalali

Ambassador and Permanent Delegate

Ms. Irina Bokova
Director-General
UNESCO House

CC: Mr. Stanley Mutumba Simataa, President of the General Conference of UNESCO

Mr. Michael Worbs, Chairperson of the Executive Board of UNESCO

Ms. Nada Al-Nashif, Assistant Director-General for Social and Human Sciences

Mr. John Crowley, Chief, Research, Policy and Foresight Section, SHS

✓ H.E. Mr. Lionel Veer, Ambassador and Permanent Delegate of the Netherlands to UNESCO