



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization

Organisation  
des Nations Unies  
pour l'éducation,  
la science et la culture

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

Организация  
Объединенных Наций по  
вопросам образования,  
науки и культуры

منظمة الأمم المتحدة  
للتربية والعلم والثقافة

联合国教育、  
科学及文化组织

The Director-General

Ladies and gentlemen,

I wish to congratulate the organizers of the Bulgarian cultural events in Auroville, which have inspired the Pavilion of Bulgaria in the International Zone of Auroville.

This year, Bulgaria celebrates 1331 years of existence as a state. It has a rich heritage and its culture is one of the oldest in Europe.

In 2012-2013, UNESCO will mark two major anniversaries from the Bulgarian history – 250 years of "Slav-Bulgarian History," written by Paissi of Hilendar, forefather of the Bulgarian National Revival.

The second event which Bulgaria promoted together with the Czech Republic and Slovakia, is the 1,150th anniversary of the arrival of the missionaries Cyril and Methodius in Great Moravia. In addition to bringing Christianity and thus bringing countries located in the territory of Great Moravia into the mainstream of European civilization of that time, they created the Cyrillic alphabet and spread the use of Old Church Slavonic as a liturgical and literary language. Thus they laid the foundations of Slavonic literature and erudition.

For their missionary work, the brothers Saints Cyril and Methodius have been declared patron saints of Europe.

I wish to commend the inauguration of the newly completed Multipurpose Hall at the Unity Pavilion, which will promote and facilitate more activities of the International Zone.

On this occasion, I would like to express my appreciation for the vision of the Auroville International Zone. This is an impressive platform embodying ideals and views that resonate with those of UNESCO. I am certain it will serve as an open space for a 'living embodiment of actual human unity', as the Charter of Auroville declares.

This is a vital task today, and I wish you all support, inspiration and courage to carry it forward.

Irina Bokova