

Tekst Uitgesproken Op 1 Juli 2001 Door Dr. Andre Kramp, Hoofd Van De Afdeling 'slave Route'- Project Van De Unesco Te Parijs Tijdens De Nationale Dag Der Bezinning Afschaffing Slavernij In De Laurenskerk, Georganiseerd Door Het Landelijk Platform Slavernijverleden.

On Human Dignity

On Behalf On The Director-General Of Unesco, And On My Own Behalf, I Would Like To Commend The Organizers Of Today's Anniversary Celebration For Organizing This Event And For Their Choice Of Today's Theme. I Would Also Like To Express My Appreciation To Them For Inviting Me To Be A Speaker Here Today. I Am Very Happy To Be Part Today's Celebration, Especially Considering My Educational And Cultural Background. Whether As A United Nations Civil Servant Or As The Descendant Of A Former Slave In The African Diaspora, I Am Strongly Committed To The Ideal Of Removing Prejudice And Fostering A True Intercultural Dialogue Among All The Peoples Of The World.

Today's Theme On "human Dignity", Has Been Most Suitably Chosen, As This Year Has Been Proclaimed By The United Nations As The International Year Of Dialogue Among Civilizations, Of Which Unesco Is The Focal Point For All The Activities In This Context. While I Have Spared No Efforts In Adhering To This Theme, I Could, Without Being Unduly Disobedient, Have Entitled Today's Address "from Slavery To Multiculturalism". On A Day Like This, It Is Most Challenging, Although No Less Painful, To Pause And Reflect On The Timeline Of Slavery, That Is, To Trace The Transformation Or The Development Of Black People's Self-Consciousness From The Period Of The Slave Trade Through Slavery And Its Abolition In Various Periods Of The Nineteenth Century And – Concomitantly - The Subsequent, Continuous Movements For Racial And Social Equality, Racial Liberation And Multiculturalism In Our Own Day. In The Final Analysis, The Notion Of Human Dignity As A Moral Invariable And As It Pertains To The Former European Slaveholding Societies Is Inextricably Linked To A Cultural Diversity Without Racial Prejudice And Cultural Dominance, On The One Hand, While Being Enriched By Peace And Harmony, On The Other.

In This Context And Within The Framework Of Commemorating The One Hundredth And Thirty-Eighth Anniversary Of The Abolition Of Slavery In The Dutch Colonies, It Is Necessary To Reflect On Cultural Diversity And Intercultural Dialogue, And Discuss These In Close Relation To The Pertinent Historical Development Of Race Relations, And The Emergence Of Multicultural Populations In The Western European Societies. Multiculturalism In These Societies Is Still A Long Way From Being Acknowledged And From Acquiring The Human Face That Is So Basic To A Peaceful And Meaningful Coexistence. For Our Purpose Today, It Is Good To Enter Into The Specificities Of Race And Colour, And To Bear In Mind From The Outset That The Transatlantic Slave Trade And Slavery Were Exclusively Directed At The Black African, Men, Women, And Children. These Crimes Were By Any Standard The Ultimate Symbols Of Violence And Represent The Most Dramatic And Tragic Episode Of Human History.

Defenders Of Slavery Usually Say That Slavery Is As Old As The World, And That It Has Existed From Antiquity As An Integral Part Of The Greek And The Roman World. While This Is True, It Is Also True That To The Romans, Slaves Were People Who Had Been Conquered, And Who Had Therefore No Rights Of Roman Citizenship. The Greeks Saw Their Slaves As Unfortunate People Who Had Failed To Cultivate Their Minds And Had To Be Reduced To Their Lowly, But Necessary State. Nevertheless, These Slaves Were Still Treated As Human Beings As They Could Legally Marry, Have A Family, Testify In Court Or Own Property. However, The Enslaved Africans Were Treated As Chattel, And Were Not Even Considered A Member Of The Human Race.

Considering The Important Role Of The Transatlantic Slave Trade And Slavery In World History, It Does Seem Rather Strange That So Few Scientific Studies On This Episode Were Undertaken In The Twentieth Century. To Date, Relatively Few Publications Have Been Devoted To The Subject, Which Almost Looks Like A Conspiracy Of Silence On This Subject. These Crimes Are Evidently An Embarrassing And Shameful Burden Upon The Shoulders Of Western European Societies. It Is Sad – If "sad" Is The Word – To Find That This Tragedy Has Been Made Invisible, So To Speak, By Being Hushed Up. This Silence Becomes Even More Suspect, If We Consider

- The Scope Of The Tragedy: Several Tens Of Millions Of Victims;
- The Ideology Which Supported It: Black African Men, Women, And Children; The Intellectual Construction Of Racism And Cultural Scorn Of African People, As Justification For Treating Human Beings As Chattel;

- The Legal Framework That Supported It: According To The Definition Of The Black Codes;
- The Profound Consequences On The Americas, The West Indies And The Indian Ocean.

Generally Speaking, People Will Show A Certain Reluctance To Examine Past Events, Especially If These Events Bring Back Painful Memories.

On The Face Of It, This Seems To Work Against Changing One's Present Condition. This Is Why Some People Prefer Not To Deal With Old Wounds, And Overlook The Criminal And Immoral Acts Of The Past Instead. This, However, Is A Self-Defeating Attitude, Which Provides No Constructive Basis For Preventing These Crimes From Occurring Again.

In This Context It Is Fitting To Note The Observation Made By Elie Wiesel, The Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, That "the Executioner Always Kills Twice, The Second Time By His Silence" Those Who Deny The Lessons Of The Past Are Very Likely To Repeat Them. We Should Not Fail To Realize That The Present Springs From The Past, And That We Make Ourselves Vulnerable By Not Realizing How The Impact Of Past Events Have Served To Shape Many Of Our Present-Day Societies And The Interactions Of The People In These Societies.

The Last Few Years The Situation Regarding Slavery Has Begun To Change Gradually, Through A Number Of International Conferences Bringing Together Black And White Historians. It Is The Moral Duty Of Everyone, Especially The Educators Among Us, To Help Break The Silence Surrounding The Slave Trade, In Order To Enable Young People To Understand Its Enormous Consequences Of Which Many Are Still Visible Today. The Ignorance Of The Slave Trade And Its Deep Underlying Causes And Characteristics May Explain Why In This Context We Still Have To Cope With Violence, Oppression, And Lack Of Respect For Human Dignity. We Must Ensure That Our Children, Whether In White-Dominated Societies Or Otherwise, Acquire A Thorough Grasp And Understanding Of The Past, Not Only The Glorious And Extraordinary Achievements Of Humanity, But Also The Tragic Episodes And Events Which Occurred, So That They Can Better Understand The Present And Be Better Prepared To Build A Bright Future, A True Humanity, Without The Curse Of Racial Prejudice.

It Is With This End In View, And In An Effort To Bring The Slave Trade And Slavery Into Focus That Unesco Launched The International "slave Route Project" In 1994. This Project Has Since Been Probing Into The Historical Facts Of This Tragedy, And Linking It With The Intercultural Dialogue, The Cultural Diversity That Developed From The Fateful Interactions Between Millions Of Africans, Amerindians, And Europeans In The Americas And The Caribbean, As Well As In The Mediterranean And The Indian Ocean.

The Project's Primary Emphasis Is The Essential Requirement Of Historical Truth And The Duty To Remember. It Is A Legitimate Return To A Long-Ignored Tragedy, In Order That Its Deep Underlying Causes, Characteristics And Consequences Can Be Studied With The Greatest Historical Rigour And Presented As A Universal Subject In The History Books Of All Its Member States.

The "Slave Route Project" Will Ensure That We Acquire A Profound Understanding Of The Slave Trade And Slavery Experience, And Its Obvious Effects, Not Only Upon Traditional Social Organisation, But Of The More Profound Effects Upon The Culture And The Personality Of The Descendants Of The Former Slaves, Notably, The Psycho-Social Impact Of Slavery On Black People.

Within This Framework, The Decision By The French Government To Declare The Transatlantic Slave Trade And Slavery A Crime Against Humanity, And To Request Other Countries To Do The Same, Is Commendable, And Would Seem To Lay The Foundations For Coming To Grips Both With The Crimes Perpetrated In A Past That Is Inescapable, And With The Devastation That It Continues To Cause On The Physical And Psychological World Of The Descendants Of The Former Slaves. At The Same Time It Provides The Basic And Forceful Elements For A True Humanity And The Road Towards Lasting Intercultural Dialogue.

Although Slavery Was Abolished More Than A Hundred Years Ago, The Pitiful Legacy Of Over 300 Years Of

Brutalities Still Lingers With Us Today, And Is Still Making Its Destructive Presence Felt On Black People Who Are Still Burdened With The Scars Of This Experience In Both Their Social And Mental Lives. It Is Unfortunate, That The Spiritual Legacy Of Slavery And Colonialism, Seen From The Perspectives Of Both Slavers And Enslaved Has Not Been Given Sufficient Prominence In The Writings Of Social Scientists And Historians. The Perception Of Colonized People Of Themselves, As Well As That Of The Colonizer And Vice Versa Is Of Crucial Importance And Significance To Understand The Major Forms Of Racism And Xenophobia Today. The “slavery Mentality” On Both Sides Was Never Eradicated From The Mind, It Would Seem, And Has In Its Persistence Come To Be The Determining Factor For The Socio-Economic Development Of Individuals In Multiracial Societies.

Before The Slave Trade It Was The British, The French, The Portuguese, And The Dutch Sailors That Traded With The Developed Communities Of West Africa For Gold, Textile And Other Products. Europeans Were, Therefore, Quite Familiar With African Civilizations That Were On The Same Level As Any Other That They Had Seen Throughout The World. In Order To Fully Understand The Historical Dimension Of Racism, It May Be Worthwhile Comparing The Changing Relations Between Africa And Europe Before, During, And After The Slave Trade. On The Basis Of Source Material From Different Periods, We Can Easily Reconstruct The Attitudes Of Europe Towards Africa. Portuguese Records Of 1486, That Is, Before The Advent Of Columbus, Relate A Visit Of An Ambassador From The King Of Benin To The King Of Portugal. From These Records I Quote The Following Fragment:

“this Ambassador Was A Man Of Good Speech And Unusual Wisdom. Great Feasts Were Held In His Honour, And He Was Shown Many Of The Good Things Of These Kingdoms. He Went Home In A Ship Of Our King’s Who, At His Departure Gave [The Ambassador] A Gift Of Rich Clothing For Himself And His Wife And Through Him Our King Also Sent A Rich Present To The King Of Benin”

After The Encounter Between Two Worlds In 1492, Which Is Known In History As The Discovery Of America, We See A Drastic Change In The Perception Of Europeans Towards Black People The Need For A Labour Force On The Plantations In Which Black Slaves Were To Serve As A Useful Means To Profitable Economic Ends, Made It Necessary To Construct The Racist Ideology And The Intellectual Justification Of Racism. This Ideology Stamped Black People As Subhuman, As Members Of An Inferior Race That Had Not Achieved Even The First Steps In Civilization. The Following Quotations Illustrate How By 1725 The Friendly Attitude Towards Africans Had Drastically Changed:

“they Are Nothing For Exportation But Slaves. ... As For Their Customs They Exactly Resemble Their Fellow Creatures And Natives, The Monkeys.”

“in General They Are Void Of [Empty] Of Genius, And Seem Almost Incapable Of Making Any Progress In Civilisation Or Science.... They Have No Moral Sensations; No Taste But For Women, Eating Greedily And Drinking To Excess; No Wish But To Be Idle.”

“i Am Apt To Suspect The Negroes To Be Naturally Inferior To The Whites. There Scarcely Was A Civilized Nation Of That Complexion. No Ingenious Manufacturers Among Them, No Arts, No Sciences.”

Ladies And Gentlemen:

It Is Safe To Say That Chattel Slavery As An Institution And The Genocidal Trade In Human Beings, As Well As The Humiliation Of Africans Could Only Exist Because There Was An Ideology That Justified It. Africans Were Different From Europeans As Regards Culture, Language And Religion, And Were Considered Heathens. No Matter How Mistaken, Europeans Felt Secure As They Believed That They Were God’s Children, And Were Required By God To Rule Over Other Nations.

The Persistent Prejudice And Racism, As Well As The Stereotypical Images, Platitudes And Clichés Against Black People Today, Date Back To This Period, And Testify To The Conscious Or Unconscious Acceptance Of The Racist Ideology Of The Time. From The Early Seventeenth Century Until Today, Western Societies Have Been Shaped By This Ideology Of White Supremacy And Black Inferiority. The People Of The African Diaspora Living In European Societies Today Suffer The Negative Consequences Of These Images Almost On A Daily Basis. Racism Directed

Against Black And Coloured People Is Thus A Most Persistent Feature Of Inter-Human Relations In Western Societies. We Only Need To Look At The Unemployment And Poverty Rates And Incomes, And The Stereotypes In The Mass Media To Understand That Racial Inequality Is Not Likely To Disappear Any Time Soon.

As Regards The Place Accorded To Black People In The Natural Order Of Things, It Is Good To Know That In The Seventeenth And Eighteenth Centuries Scientists Were In The Habit Of Classifying The Natural World, That Is, All Creation, Even The Creator Himself. This Was Called The Great Chain Of Being. It Started With Inanimate Things And Ranged Upwards Through The Lowliest Forms Of Life, Through The Animals Until It Reached Man Himself, After Which It Continued Through But It Did Not Stop With Man, It Continued Upward Through All The Ranks Of Heavenly Creatures Until It Reached Its Top In God. The Chain Was Continuous, Without Gaps. Man Was Ranked Between The Heavenly Creatures And The Beasts. The Europeans Established Many Different Varieties Of Men In The Chain, And They Placed The White Man At The Top, While Ranking Black People And Apes Together At The Bottom. Proceeding From The Distorted Logic That Black People Were Intellectually Inferior To Europeans, It Is No Wonder Why It Was Felt Necessary To “humanize”, “civilize” And “control” Black People. It Was Also Felt That Only The Europeans Were Called Upon To Perform These Missions. This Violence Was Obviously Not Only Necessary As A Rationalized Ideology, But It Was Also Required As A Psychological Imperative. The Birth Of Science In The Beginning Of The Seventeenth Century Provided The Racist Ideologists With The “scientific” Tools To Further Rationalize Their Prejudices. Now They Considered Themselves Qualified To Prove “scientifically” That Black People Were Inferior Creatures.

Another Significant Example To Illustrate Prejudice And Stereotyping Is The Concept Of “sambo”. The Name "Sambo" As A "Race Stereotype" Indicating The Personality Of A Particular Type Of Slave And Without Regard To Its Moral Implications Was A Household Word Among Slave Owners. The Characteristics That Have Been Ascribed To This Type Of Slave Border On Moral Decadence, To Say The Least. Sambo, The Typical Plantation Slave, Has Been Described As Obedient But Irresponsible, Loyal But Lazy, Humble But Chronically Given To Lying And Stealing; His Behaviour And His Speech Were Full Of Infantile Silliness And Childish Exaggeration. His Relationship With His Master Was One Of Complete Dependence And Childlike Affection. This Childlike Quality Was The Very Key To His Being.

Sambo Was For Slave Owners Not Only A Dominant Plantation Type, But Also They Were Convinced That His Characteristics Were Based On Racial Inheritance. Although Slavery Has Been Abolished, The Concept Of “sambo” Has Survived As A Stereotype With A Connotation Of Insinuating Racial Inferiority And Discrimination.

There Is No End Of Examples To Show The Construction, The Cause And Effect Of Racism, And Of The Ways In Which Former Slaves And Their Descendants Have Been Portrayed By The Dominant, Or Mainstream Western Culture. These Images Have Not Failed To Leave Their Mark, As They Have Been Most Damaging To The Image Of Black People In Their Strife To Develop A Meaningful Existence For Themselves. The Unesco "Slave Route Project" Is A Means Of Dismantling The Ideology Of Racism Which Influenced All The Societies Affected By The Transatlantic Slave Trade And Slavery.

Ladies And Gentlemen:

In Our Strife For Human Dignity In Relation To This Sad Episode Of Slave Trade And Slavery We Should Not Confine Ourselves To The Bare Historical Facts, But We Should Also Closely Examine The Cultural Implications Involved In The Black Experience Of The African Diaspora With Regard To The Caribbean, Latin America, And Europe. Culture Has Been The Driving Force Of The Contacts Among The Slaves, And It Has Demonstrated Its Power Of Survival, In Spite Of The Violent Treatment Of The Enslaved Africans. The Cultures Of The Caribbean And Latin America Were Created From The Enforced Interactions Between European And African Cultures, And Were The Achievement Of Resistance. They Are Of Necessity Resistance Cultures. The Ability And The Capacity Of The Slaves To Struggle And Survive In Such Hostile Environment, And Their Brave And Violent Resistance For Emancipation Were Heroic Deeds That Can Never Be Overstated. One Should Not Forget That Resistance Was Part And Parcel Of The Very Existence Of The Africans In The Diaspora. While Being Victims Of Their Situation, The Slaves Were Still Fully Aware Of Their Own Identities, And Were In Full Possession Of Their Myths, Their Religions, Their Rhythms, And Their Values. Although They Were Scattered On Arrival, The Slaves Were Determined To Preserve These Values In Any Way Possible. With A View To Improving Their Chances Of Survival, The Slaves Had To Transform Themselves To Create New Cultures And New Languages. It Was This Determination That Enabled Them To

Survive, Resist, And Reinforce Their Identities. They Developed A Great Adaptability As They Had To Learn The Different Customs And Rituals Of One Another. In The Process They Had To Abandon Or Modify Some Aspects Of Their Own Cultures To Feel Comfortable In The Newly Created One.

Thus, In The Fight For Freedom And Dignity Was Born The Rich Cultural Diversity, The Legacy That Has Become An Essential Part Of The Common Heritage Of The World.. We Must Never Overlook The Valuable Contributions That Africa Made To The Development Of The Americas, The Caribbean, Europe And To The World At Large.

This New Culture Generated Strength For The Slaves To Confront The Institution Of Slavery Special Attention Should Be Paid To The Rich Musical Heritage That Has Originated From The Black Diaspora And Has Contributed To The Flowering Of Many Different Musical Genres That Have Come To Be Taken For Granted In Our Present-Day World. The Strong African Influence That Pervades The Music, Dance, The Arts, And Religious Practices, In Latin America And The Caribbean Is Reminiscent Of The Variety Of African Cultures That The Slaves Brought With Them And Which They Had Been Unwilling To Relinquish.

Learning About Slavery Must Involve Learning About The Formidable Cultural And Economic Contributions Of The Slaves To The Socio-Cultural Developments Of The Societies In Which They Lived And Struggled. It Is The Memory Of Our Proud, Courageous, And Intelligent Ancestors That Should Motivate Us, Their Descendants To Cherish The Fruit Of Their Struggle And Fully Emancipate Our Minds.

Ladies And Gentlemen:

How Do We Deal With The Cultural Pluralism, That Is, The Cultures Resulting From The Interaction Of Africans, Amerindians, And Europeans Who Had Been Forced To Live Together Under Slavery? What Recognition Do We Give To The Richness Of Distinctive Cultures, The Intangible Heritage That Is Part Of Our Common World Heritage? The Question That Needs To Be Answered Basically In Respect Of The Former Slaveholding Societies Of Western Europe That Are Now Multi-Cultural Is What Can Be Done To Promote And Sustain Genuine Cultural Pluralism, Locally And Across Nations. Given The Racial Configuration Of These Societies, What Is Called For Here Is The Readiness To Deal Unconditionally With A Diversity Of Cultural Viewpoints In An Atmosphere Of Openness And Responsiveness Rather Than With Mistrust And Rejection. The Challenge Of Cultural Diversity Is To Develop Cultural Integrity And Increasingly Recognize The Rights Of Others To Maintain And Develop Their Identities.

The Promotion Of This Ideal Implies Of Necessity Not Only That The Said Societies Incorporate Minority Cultures Into Their Own, But Also That They Encourage The Sustainability And The Survival Of These Cultures. It Implies, Further, The Willingness To Drastically Review And Reevaluate The Status Quo Norms And Values, And To Refrain From Any Form Of Social Control Over One Or More Ethnic Groups That Are Part And Parcel Of The Total Spectrum, From Finding Fault With Behavioural And Cultural Patterns As Deviating From The Dominant Culture, Which, Generally Speaking Is Middle Class And Strictly Normative. Failure To Do This More Often Than Not Results In Persistent Exclusion Of Minorities, From A Professional And Social Point Of View.

For Better Understanding And Appreciating The Richness Of Multiculturalism, Authorities In These Societies Should Promote The Recognition Of Cultural Coexistence, The Removal Of Prejudice, And The Nurturing Of Unbiased Interaction With Other Cultures Of One's Society. These Are The Very Elements Of Human Dignity. Anything Less Than That Is A Narrow View Of Civilisation And Sustainable Living. The Intellectual Stereotyping, Racism, And Xenophobia, Which - As We Have Found - Date Back To The Less Enlightened Periods In History, Is One Of Major Obstacles To The Fruitful Development Of A Truly Multicultural Society. A Truly Multicultural Society Does Not Recognize Majorities And Minorities And Is Sustained By Intercultural Relations.

School Children And Students Should Be Made To Fully Understand The Effect Of Such Concepts As Racism, Ideologies, Stereotypes, Prejudice, And Discrimination; As Well As The Direct Link Between The Contemporary Experiences Of Black People And The Experiences Of Their Ancestors

A Multicultural Society As We See It, Needs To Be Transparent In The Sense That The Distribution Of Employment And Functions For Social And Economic Mobility Should Be Predictable As Constituting A True Representation Of Its Cultural Composition. As A General Evaluation One Can Say Without Exaggeration That The Former Slave Holding Societies Of Europe Are Not Multicultural In The True Sense, And That The Rhetoric Of Integration And

Assimilation Would Seem To Be Nothing Short Of A Romantic Notion. Whatever The Extent Of Integration And Acceptance Of Minorities That Has So Far Been Realized, The General Picture Is Still Very Grim And Superficial. The Little Success That Has, On The Face Of It, Been Achieved, Has Been At The Expense Of Ambivalent Black Intellectuals, Who Seem To Be Integrating More Rapidly Than Other Blacks, As Their Education Provides Them With Acceptable Standards Of Living, On The One Hand, And – Sadly - By Self-Denying A Great Deal Of What Is Reminiscent Of Their Origins And Cultural Backgrounds. This Group Of Black People Should Be Encouraged By The Establishment To Assume A Leadership Role Towards Both The Black Under-Class And The Black Middle-Class In Understanding The Problems Of Assimilation. Indeed, Current Studies On This Aspect Of Multiculturalism Have Shown That A Large Number Of Black Intellectuals Think Along Very Much The Same Line As The Dominant Group, As Regards The Stereotype And Conventional Notions About Blacks. The Establishment Should Refrain From Capitalizing On These Weaknesses, In Order Not To Slow Down The Pace Of A True Cultural Diversity, As These Black Intellectuals Appear To Be Quite Unconscious Of The Extent To Which They Continue To Repeat And Help Perpetuate These Prejudicial Ideas.

Ladies And Gentlemen:

It Is Vital To Realize That Although Integration Is Part And Parcel Of Multiculturalism, It Can Never Mean That One Should Empty One's Life Of Its Meaningful Content By Getting Rid Of All Black Identification; It Can

Never Mean The Eradication Of The Physical, Cultural, And Spiritual Features Of Black People. This Would Create A False Security, And Would Limit The Role Of Europeans In Understanding And Restoring Black Self-Consciousness.

The Establishment Must Also Ensure, That The Ultimate Mental Liberation Of Black People Be Guided Substantially By Their Own Independent Actions And Activities, And Not Solely By The Expectation That True Liberation Can Only Depend On A Changed Mentality Of Europeans.

In This Connection The Dutch Government Must Be Congratulated For The Decision To Establish A Monument In Commemoration Of Slavery, In Cooperation With The Dutch National Foundation For The Commemoration Of Enslavement And Slavery; And An Institution For Breaking The Silence And For Teaching Slavery And Its Consequences In An Atmosphere Of Openness And Integrity.

In Order To Realize The Ideals Of This Institute, And Sustain The Objectives Of Its Existence, It Is Important That The Day-To-Day Management Of The Institute Be Entrusted To Intellectuals That Are Best Placed And Committed To Provide The Type Of Management And Leadership Required. I Would Express The Hope That The Institute Is Not Hampered By White Supremacist Attitudes That Would Be Self-Defeating To Its Objectives.

More Than Anything Else, The Descendants Of The Former Slaves Should Be Made To Experience This Institute As Their Own, Which Would Facilitate The Restoration Of Black Self-Consciousness And The Difficulty Of Coping With The Legacy Of Slavery And The Black Experience.

In Conclusion, I Would Again Like To Congratulate One And All With This Emancipation Day, While At The Same Time I Would Like To Emphasize That We Must Face The Challenge Of Cultural Pluralism, And That Much Of Our Wealth Resides In Our Intangible Heritage, In Our Cultural Diversity. In Order To Make Our Future Brighter, It Is Important That We Ensure Equal Opportunity To All, Reaffirm Our Identity, Self-Confidence, Pride In One's Origin And In One's Culture And An Openness To Others And To Other Cultures.

I Thank You