

November 8, 2002

The Honorable George W. Bush
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We are writing to commend you for your September 12, 2002 announcement that the United States will rejoin the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). As you recognized in your statement to the UN General Assembly, U.S. participation will support UNESCO's mission "to advance human rights and tolerance and learning."

In the eighteen years since the United States withdrew from UNESCO, the organization has addressed U.S. concerns regarding inefficient management practices by undergoing extensive reforms. UNESCO has also refocused its mandate on specific priorities that are important to the U.S. such as universal education, press freedom, freshwater resources management, and ethics in science and technology. It provides a forum for international cooperation and cross-cultural dialogue in these key areas.

In Afghanistan, UNESCO is laying the foundation for a free and independent media by training journalists and helping to relaunch the *Kabul Weekly*, the first independent newspaper in Afghanistan since the fall of the Taliban. In Africa and other regions with high incidences of HIV/AIDS, UNESCO is promoting preventative education to stop the disease's spread. UNESCO is helping to create cross-border respect for natural and cultural areas and objects through its programs to identify and promote understanding of the diversity of world heritage. Through its "Education for All" campaign, UNESCO is working to dramatically reduce global illiteracy and provide universal primary education by 2015.

It is important that the United States reengage fully in UNESCO at this critical time in order to maximize this channel for increasing global understanding and cooperation. An appropriate increase in the State Department budget for the International Organization Affairs Bureau will allow this to happen. We look forward to working with you to ensure Congress authorizes and appropriates the funds necessary for the U.S. to rejoin UNESCO in the upcoming year.

Sincerely,

James K. Wyerman, Executive Director, **20/20 Vision**

Dr. Iris J. Prager, CHES, FAAHE, President, **American Association for Health Education (AAHE)**

David Ward, President, **American Council on Education**

Dr. Dan E. Davidson, **President, American Councils for International Education: ACTR/ACCELS**

Sandra Feldman, President, **American Federation of Teachers**

Anne Ring, President, **American Intercultural Student Exchange**

William F. Brinkman, President, **American Physical Society**

John E. Fobes, President, **Americans for the Universality of UNESCO**

Trudy Hermann, Executive Director, **Amity Institute**

Hilda Crespo, Vice President Public Policy and Federal Relations, **ASPIRA**

Gene R. Carter, Ed.D., **Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development**

Phyllis Cuttino, Executive Director, **Better World Campaign**

Dr. Ian Davis, Director, **British American Security Information Council (BASIC)**

Don Kraus, Executive Director, **Campaign for UN Reform**

Rev. Greg Davidson Laszakovits, Coordinator, **Church of the Brethren Washington Office**

Jerrye G. Champion, National President, **Church Women United**

Harry Blaney, President, **Coalition for American Leadership Abroad (COLEAD)**

Michael Aurbach, President, **College Art Association**

Bruce Abbe, Vice President of Public Affairs, **Communicating for Agriculture**

Jenefer Ellingston, Chairperson, **DC Statehood Green Party**

Jan Hartke, Executive Director, **EarthVoice**

Bridget Moix, Legislative Secretary, **Friends Committee on National Legislation**

Irving Sarnoff, Director, **Friends of the United Nations**

Dr. Judith Lutz, International President, **The General Federation of Women's Clubs**

Ann Smith, Executive Director, **Global Education Associates**

Alice Slater, President, **Global Resource Action Center for the Environment (GRACE)**

Bonnie Lipton, National President, **Hadassah, the Women's Zionist Organization of America**

Patricia Forkan, Executive Vice President, **The Human Society of the United States**

Janet Frake, Administrative Director, **The Human Society International**

Barbara Leslie, NGO Observer, **International Council of Jewish Women**

Gustavo Araoz, Executive Director, **International Council on Monuments and Sites, U.S. Committee**

Alan E. Farstrup, Ph.D., Executive Director, **International Reading Association**

Ned Strong, Executive Director, **LASPAU: Academic and Professional Programs for the Americas**

Mark Brown, **Lutheran Office for Governmental Affairs, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**

Dennis Frado, **Lutheran Office for World Community, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**

Khalil E. Jahshan, Director, **National Association of Arab-Americans/American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (NAAA-ADC)**

Dr. Dan Wagner, Director and Professor of Education, **National Center on Adult Literacy/International Literacy Institute, University of Pennsylvania**

Susan Griffin, Executive Director, **National Council for the Social Studies**

Reg Weaver, President, **National Education Association**

Greg Speeter, Executive Director, **National Priorities Project**

Rose Walker, President, **The National Service Conference of The American Ethical Union**

Robert C. Henderson, Secretary General, **The National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the U.S.**

Kathy Thornton, RSM, National Coordinator, **NETWORK: A National Catholic Social Justice Lobby**

Morton H. Halperin, Director, **Open Society Policy Center**

Monica Willard, UN NGO Representative, **Pathways to Peace**

Rev. Elenora Giddings Ivory, Director, **Washington Office, Presbyterian Church (USA)**

Ambassador Jonathan Dean, Advisor of International Security Issues, **Union of Concerned Scientists**

Rob Cavanaugh, Director, Washington Office for Advocacy, **Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations**

Rev. Dr. Douglas B. Hunt, Washington Representative, **United Church of Christ Network for Environmental and Economic Responsibility**

Bishop S. Clifton Ives, President, **United Methodist Church, General Board of Church and Society**

William Luers, President and CEO, **United Nations Association of the U.S.A.**

Charles J. Lyons, President, **U.S. Fund for UNICEF**

Michael Sklaar, President, **World Exchange**

Mark S. Epstein, Executive Director, **World Federalist Association**

Jim Cramer, President, **World Learning**

Michelle Ciarrocca, Research Associate, **World Policy Institute**

Marilyn Greene, Executive Director, **World Press Freedom Committee**

Cc: The Honorable Colin Powell
The Honorable Roderick Paige
The Honorable Tommy Thompson
The Honorable Condoleeza Rice
The Honorable John Negroponte