His Excellency Mr. Koichïro Matsuura, The Director General of UNESCO,

His Excellency Dr. Abdel Aziz Ben Osman Al-Twaigry, The Director General of ISESCO,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my pleasure to extend my greetings to you all on behalf of ALECSO (The Arab league Educational Cultural and Scientific organisation) and to thank my friend Mr. Koichïro Matsuura and the United Nations University for their kind invitation to attend this very special event, in the presence of a distinguished international group of elites.

On this occasion, it is worth mentioning that our gathering is on the right place and in the right time. I have to state that it is very fortunate that this great event is taking place in Japan - a country which has been characterised by its persistent ability throughout history to interweave and preserve its historical and geographical entity into a contemporary reality. This reality reflects to us to day the ability of Japan to successfully intertwine its national heritage with technological creativity.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am addressing your esteemed gathering in the name of ALECSO- a regional Arab Organization, whose primary responsibility is the promotion and co-ordination of educational cultural and scientific activities in the Arab region. A few days ago we celebrated its 31ts anniversary. Those years were full of events that highlighted co-operation and interactivity with different bodies at the regional and international levels. ALECSO has been very vocal in putting forward the conscience of Arab Nation and expressing its values and thoughts, as reflected in the fields of education, culture and science. Furthermore, ALECSO is exerting its utmost effort in confronting all challenges that face the Arab Nation, one of which is opening the channels of mutual and multi dialogues at all levels with other cultures and entities. The aim of this is to serve the purpose of peace and human exchange of experience. By so doing, ALECSO is destined to live the spirit and realities of this contemporary age. In order to carry out this burden successfully,
ALECSO is required to play a very distinctive role in the process of bridging the gap between the people of this globe in order to consolidate such endeavours as those undertaken by UNESCO and ISESCO.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have come here from another part of the globe separated by thousands of miles, yet this part which is bearing the great Arab Islamic civilization is very close to human intricate relations throughout history. This Islamic civilization, despite its obvious contribution to humanity in all walks of life, has sometimes been a target of unjustifiable offenses, as can obviously be noted in the midst of to-day's no boundary globalization. The fact that this century had been characterized by catastrophic wars, bloodshed and identity crises, imposes a problematic situation at its final epoch, which coincided with globalization economic trends. We, in the Arab Islamic world, are not the only victims of this situation. Therefore in the context of this present panorama, a serious question remains to be answered. How can we avoid wars of civilizations or collision of cultures and identities?

There is no doubt that we are witnessing to day the obliteration of political boundaries and the formation of a contemporary human identity. This trend of change puts the civilization to which I belong into an unjustifiable accusation. For some it is a mere aggressive entity that breeds on wars with others. For others, it is stereotyped as an entity that revolts against itself, if a common enemy does not exist. Still others go far beyond that and classify it as a dangerous entity to the Western civilization. There is no doubt that such accusations will close the door of dialogue to the benefit of collision and this in itself is against the Islamic values and against the human understanding it calls persistently for.

It is also unfortunate that a good number of Western strategists have imaginatively established an arena of collision between the Western civilization and other civilizations. The solution they presented is a model where the Western civilization should prevail. Unfortunately their voices become louder and louder in the age of unharnessed media and effective communication means. What can we say, while being rubber stamped as peripheral societies that should not belong to history or life at large? How can we establish justifiable dialogue while being stereotyped as aggressive entity that deserve extermination by a few number who have louder and many voices. We strongly reject those unfounded accusations, and I assure you that we shall overcome this trend and will resist such malicious attitudes. Our aim is to open dialogue with all cultures, without prejudices and without predetermined ideas, in order to live in peace and avoid being trapped into the arenas of collision.

Being at the head of the Arab league Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organisation and guided by its great aims and ideals, I promise
that I shall work with all those concerned to avoid the process of action and reaction with those bearing anti-human destructive ideas that will only result in putting fuel to fire. This attitude, which I strongly stand for, is not something to be invented or created. As a matter of fact it is an interpretation to the Arabic Islamic civilisation, which is deeply engulfed into the cultural values of the Arab Moslem societies.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As a representative of The Arab Islamic culture, I would like to assure you that this part of the world believes unconditionally that globalization is not considered as a monster or an untamed fierce enemy. Our belief, simply emphasizes the necessity of humanizing globalization.

Speaking about the world of technological knowledge and digitalization which is continuously adding new dimensions to the information revolution, it should be stressed that this knowledge is adding remarkable value to the human well being as well as evident threat to its existence. There is no doubt that this contradictory situation requires dialogue between the different cultures, in order to sustain the colourful mosaic beauty of the world cultures in all corners of the globe that shaped human civilization in the past and should be shaping it in the present and the future. Such dialogue should be extended to all human endeavours, at all levels and by all competent international bodies such as the United Nations and its affiliate institutions. Co-operation to activate dialogue should be extended to encompass non-governmental bodies and intellectual thinkers at the regional and international levels. By all means, dialogue between cultures has become a fact of life, especially at this critical junction of human history which is now governed by globalization and its future shocks. By dialogue we can all be immuned against these shocks and avoid any catastrophic results. We are, therefore, responsible for supporting all efforts that lead to dialogue between cultures, not only to meet the existing challenges, but also to create a new world order, based ultimately on the respect of humanity and acceptance of others.

We also believe that dialogue between cultures is based on historical facts. The Arab Islamic culture has always been open to give and take process, since it is humanitarian by nature. It was able to co-exist with Asian, African and European civilizations throughout history. It contributed to all these civilizations without arrogance or containment and also without vanishing into those civilisations.

The Arab Islamic culture gives due respect to the identity and speciality of the other cultures in respect of the social and cultural set up of the societies it came into contact with. The aim has always been to enrich the outcome without exclusion or elimination. This is typically the Arab Islamic civilization which characterizes it until the present time.
The Arab Nation, has always strived to assure its continued presence during the past events which highlighted the cultural dialogues. We are still supporting without any preservation the efforts of UNESCO in this field as effective participants in all occasions. The Arab Nation shall continue supporting such efforts to prove the elements of strength that prevailed the Arab culture and highlight its speciality and ability that will contribute to the existing cultures. The elements of positive contribution are guaranteed as long as there is a will of interaction with others, and as long as we possess a huge historical storage that shaped the near past and will shape the forthcoming future.

Based on these realities, the cultural dialogue in which we believe and support, is a dialogue of competence and equity that is based on the acknowledgement of the other and respect of his culture and identity. We stand firmly against mere imposing of any uni-culture into our societies, in order not to be reduced to negative receivers and blind consumers.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is obvious that the communication revolution has swept aside many concepts and human values and there is fear that human dialogue concept comes at the front line of defence of this dilemma. Our gathering could therefore, be an indicator that we are sharing an ultimate necessity of establishing a new type of dialogue. However this new dialogue is confronted with various challenges and many obstacles, especially when perceived among other priorities which pertain to the intricate economic and commercial issues. We can get no where if we consider these priorities as preconditions to the dialogue in question. Other human values and ideals have to be considered as catalysts of fruitful and benevolent dialogue, despite the leading power of the gigantic multi national companies. If we look into this power as the only one on the stage of globalization, without due consideration to the other perpetual human values, our efforts to establish robust dialogue would be futile.

Ladies and Gentleman,

It must be stressed that our space ship earth needs an honest watchman to be entrusted with guarding it against encroachment of malevolent trespassers. In this space ship earth we, in the Arab countries, will not stand against human progress and welfare, neither against technological development. We believe in all those human values, which pertain to life long learning, languages, freedom of thought and freedom of human and commodity movement. We strongly believe in truly meant human rights without prejudice or double standard.
We stand firmly against racism, hatred and the exclusion of others, whoever they are and wherever they live. We are against the collision of civilisations and religious wars. In short we shall be with you for the good of humanity.

Ladies and Gentleman,

The crucial question to day is: how can we convert the assumed existing encounter between cultures into a dialogue marked by parity and justice; and how can we build a global humane society multi-cultur, based on the educational and moral Values? What is needed to get positive answers, is to push forward the ideals of international co-operation that emphasizes tolerance and the culture of peace. Furthermore there should be popular enlightenment and sensitization in these directions in schools and all types of media.

Ladies and Gentleman,

There is no doubt that the inception of globalization stimulated other issues which put forward new dimensions to human relationships at the present time. This can be traced in the fields of bio-technology and genetic engineering. Despite the fact that these fields have been newly tackled, we should work together to construct a new philosophical and moral formulae to deal with the ensuing problems of the new discoveries relating to these fields, in order to preserve the dignity of man and his human nature.

Finally Ladies and Gentlemen, may I call upon you that we should work together, hand in hand, in order to reach our ultimate goal to which the right beginning is the cultural dialogue that will lead to diminishing of confrontation and sustaining the value of tolerance and humane contacts? We need a dialogue that will restrain hatred, racism and religion conflicts. By so doing we can build together a world of tranquillity, and peaceful co-existence.