



Indian Diaspora Council®

## **Indian Diaspora Council International**

Shared heritage, aspirations and interests

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### **Press Statement**

#### **IDC Congratulates New Director General of UNESCO, Ms Audrey Azoulay**

The **Indian Diaspora Council International (IDC)** joins with its global membership and affiliates in congratulating Ms. Audrey Azoulay, the newly elected Director General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (**UNESCO**). The 39<sup>th</sup> session of UNESCO's General Conference elected Audrey Azoulay as Director-General of UNESCO for a four-year term beginning 15<sup>th</sup> November, 2017. Audrey Azoulay succeeds Irina Bokova, the previous Director General of UNESCO.

In 2014, as an advisor on culture to the President of the French Republic, Audrey Azoulay notably initiated the development of a protection plan for heritage in danger, which she was able to implement in 2016 as Minister of Culture and Communication. She has also prioritized improving children's access to culture with the launch of artistic and cultural education school programmes "Création en cours" and created innovative cultural outreach programmes for people in remote and vulnerable areas "Microfolies".

UNESCO is a specialized agency of the United Nations based in Paris, France. UNESCO encourages international peace and universal respect for human rights by promoting collaboration among nations. UNESCO is responsible for coordinating international cooperation in education, science, culture and communication.

UNESCO promotes protection of heritage and fosters creativity. "In today's interconnected world, culture's power to transform societies is clear. Its diverse manifestations – from our cherished historic monuments and museums to traditional practices and contemporary art forms – enrich our everyday lives in countless ways. Heritage constitutes a source of identity and cohesion for communities disrupted by bewildering change and economic instability. Creativity contributes to building open, inclusive and pluralistic societies. Both heritage and creativity lay the foundations for vibrant, innovative and prosperous knowledge societies".

According to Audrey Azoulay, "none of the major challenges facing the world today can be met by any one country on its own without relying on the fundamental pillars of science, education and culture. Thus, UNESCO can and must fully participate in a world order based on multilateralism and humanist values."

Indian Arrival memorial Apravasi Ghat in Mauritius is designated a World Heritage site. Dr. Arnold Thomas, IDC Coordinator in St. Vincent and Grenadines is a member of UNESCO's Caribbean team. IDC president Ashook Ramsaran states: "We look forward to closer collaboration with UNESCO to promote and preserve Girmitya historic sites, culture, history, works of art and records. We are appointing a Paris-based IDC Coordinator to work closely with UNESCO for preservation and promotion of Indian Diaspora history and culture".

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*Indian Diaspora Council International (IDC), established in 1997, is an international non-profit organization with global affiliates and membership in 21 countries with the objective to embrace, engage and enhance the shared heritage, aspirations and interests of persons of Indian origin with optimum inclusivity.*