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Организация
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联合国教育、
科学及文化组织

**Address by Mr Koïchiro Matsuura, Director-General of UNESCO,
on the occasion of the UNESCO-Madanjeet Singh Prize for the Promotion
of Tolerance and Non-Violence**

**To be delivered on his behalf by Mr Marcio Barbosa,
Deputy Director-General of UNESCO**

UNESCO, 16 November 2006

Mr President [of the international jury for the Prize],
Ambassador Madanjeet Singh,
Excellencies,
Distinguished 2006 laureates;
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my pleasure to welcome you to the award ceremony of the UNESCO-Madanjeet Singh Prize for the Promotion of Tolerance and Non-Violence. My special thanks and appreciation go to the president of the international jury of the Prize, and former President of Colombia, Mr Andrés Pastrana Arango. We are honoured to have you with us here today.

Let me also extend a particularly warm welcome to Mr Madanjeet Singh – writer, diplomat, UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador, and benefactor of this distinguished Prize. Today's ceremony owes its very existence to Mr Singh's personal commitment and generosity. May I express my sincere gratitude to him for the outstanding support he has shown to the aims and ideals of UNESCO.

The promotion of tolerance and mutual respect lies at the heart of UNESCO's mandate. Our organization was created "to build peace in the minds of men", and tolerance is one of the fundamental values upon which such peace can be forged. It is highly symbolic that today, 16 November 1995, the date of UNESCO's anniversary, is also the International Day of Tolerance.

As the Declaration of Principles on Tolerance, adopted by UNESCO's General Conference in 1995, reaffirms, tolerance signifies the "respect, acceptance and appreciation of the rich diversity of our world's cultures, our forms of expression and ways of being human". In today's increasingly multicultural societies, tolerance forms a basic principle of democracy and the very foundation for the peaceful coexistence of peoples.

The Declaration therefore calls on UNESCO's Member States to "take all positive measures necessary to promote tolerance in our societies". The Prize that we will award here today is an important contribution in this regard.

The UNESCO-Madanjeet Singh Prize was created in 1995. Dedicated to advancing the spirit of tolerance across all of UNESCO's domains of action, the one hundred thousand-dollar Prize is awarded every two years to an individual or an institution for their outstanding contribution to the promotion of tolerance and non-violence.

The Prize was first given on the occasion of the United Nations Year for Tolerance, proclaimed to mark the 50th anniversary of the UN and UNESCO. The Prize's first award also coincided with the 125th anniversary of the birth of Mahatma Gandhi, the great Indian apostle of non-violence. Perhaps no other modern thinker or spiritual leader has better defined, in his own language and imagery, just what we mean today by that very active virtue, "tolerance".

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Upon the unanimous recommendation of the international jury presided by President Arango, I am pleased to announce that the Director-General of UNESCO, Mr Koïchiro Matsuura, who is unfortunately unable to be with us today, has decided to award the 2006 UNESCO-Madanjeet Singh Prize to Mr Veerasingam Anandasangaree, honourable member of the Sri Lankan Parliament.

Mr Anangasangaree was born in Sri Lanka in 1933. After working as a teacher and lawyer, he became the President of the Tamil United Liberation Front in 2002. Throughout his life, Mr Anangasangaree has been an indefatigable advocate of democracy and non-violent conflict resolution. A vocal opponent of terrorism, he has campaigned for justice in an open spirit of dialogue. His work has helped to

raise awareness of the Tamil cause, and created hopes for a united and peaceful Sri Lanka.

I am therefore delighted to present Mr Anandasangaree with this diploma, this cheque for one hundred thousand US dollars, and this bronze trophy especially created for this Prize by the talented Japanese artist, Toshimi Ishii.

We honour and applaud your brave efforts, against many obstacles, to defeat intolerance, violence and suffering. May you continue your vital work.

[The diploma, cheque and trophy are presented to Mr Anandasangaree.]

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am also pleased to award mentions of honour to four further remarkable examples of work to promote tolerance and non-violence.

The first mention of honour goes to the Afroreggae Cultural Group, a Brazilian NGO founded in 1993, after the massacre of 21 people in the favela of Vigario Geral. The Group has developed a unique approach to the social integration of young people in Rio de Janeiro, using arts and culture to break down social barriers and prejudices, and create neutral spaces for dialogue and conflict mediation. Afroreggae also provides children and youth with infrastructure, information and vocational training, thus offering an alternative to the lure of drugs and crime.

[The diploma is presented to Mr Vitor Onofre]

Our second mention of honour goes to Professor Herbert C. Kelman. Through his commitment to ethical standards of research, Professor Kelman has made an important contribution to the Human and Social Sciences. His efforts to gain a better understanding of practices that destroy human dignity, such as torture and genocide, have helped to promote greater respect for the human condition. Professor Kelman has also been engaged for many years in the development of interactive problem-solving techniques and an unofficial third-party approach to the resolution of conflicts. Through this, he helped to lay the groundwork for the Oslo Accords and the Geneva Initiative for peace in the Middle East.

[The diploma is presented to Professor Roseli Fischmann on behalf of Professor Kelman]

Two further candidates for this year's UNESCO-Madanjeet Singh Prize have been recognized for mentions of honour.

The Palestine-Israel Journal is a non-profit organization. It was established in 1994 by two prominent journalists, Ziad Abu-Zayyad and Victor Cygielman, as a response to the felt need for an organ of dialogue among public opinion and policy-makers in the region. The Journal is an independent publication, produced as a specific joint venture between Israelis and Palestinians. It seeks to put light on the complex issues dividing these two peoples, with the aim of building dialogue and, ultimately, mutual tolerance, respect and understanding.

[The diploma is presented to Mr Serguei Lazarev, on behalf of Palestine-Israel Journal]

Finally, I wish to signal the admirable work of the Municipality of Derbent, in the Daghestan Republic of the Russian Federation. The Municipality successfully mobilized political and religious leaders to work out an agreement on "public and interethnic accord". This agreement assures the peaceful cohabitation of the diverse cultural, religious and ethnic communities of Derbent. The Municipality has also created fora such as the "Public Council of Derbent" and the "Council of Elders" to encourage citizen participation and dialogue. The city is here represented by its mayor, Mr Feliks Kaziakhmedov.

[The diploma is presented to Mr Feliks Kaziakhmedov]

May I express my support and encouragement for these noble efforts to promote tolerance and non-violence across different regions of the world. Yours are examples that we must follow and emulate.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am now honoured to give the floor to Mr Veerasingham Anandasangaree. Thank you.