



THE REPRESENTATIVE
OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
TO THE
UNITED NATIONS

June 30, 2017

His Excellency Antonio Guterres
Secretary-General of the United Nations
UN Headquarters
New York, NY 10017

Irina Bokova
Director-General of the United Nations Education, Science and Culture Organization
7 place Fontenoy
75007 Paris, France

Dear Mr. Secretary-General and Director-General Bokova,

I write to express the strong opinion of the United States that the Tomb of the Patriarchs in Hebron, West Bank, not be added to the list of UNESCO World Heritage Sites In Danger at the Organization's meeting in Krakow on July 2, 2017.

The Tomb of the Patriarchs, which is sacred to three faiths, is under no immediate threat. Such a designation risks undermining the seriousness such an assessment by UNESCO should have. Many precious sites—from the Democratic Republic of the Congo to Libya to Iraq to Syria—are under real and imminent threat of destruction today. They urgently demand UNESCO's full and immediate attention, which should not be wasted on this sort of symbolic action.

As the United States is engaged in trying to increase the chances of a peace deal that is in the best interests of both Israel and the Palestinians, this effort at UNESCO—the motto of which is “Building Peace in the Minds of Men and Women”—is particularly ill-timed and unfortunate. I hope you will join the United States in opposing this measure.

My very best,


Nikki R. Haley
Permanent Representative to the United Nations
of the United States of America