

**Mr Navracsics - Meeting with Archbishop Alain Paul  
Lebeaupin, Apostolic Nuncio to the EU  
Brussels, 1 June 2015**

**Speaking points / Line to take**

- Stress that the EU is deeply committed to cultural diversity and heritage, as well as to religious freedom and interfaith dialogue.
- Note that the events in France and Denmark have brought home the importance of intercultural dialogue and freedom of expression. And point out that you have been actively exploring what can be done through education and by mobilising young people's participation.
- Recall in this regard the informal meeting of European Education Ministers in Paris on 17 March and the common Declaration to promote social inclusion, combat prejudice, foster civic and social competences through education.
- Stress that the Declaration marked the determination of the EU to mobilise the education sector to promote fundamental values that lie at the heart of the European Union: respect for human dignity, freedom (including freedom of expression), democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights.

- Note that the declaration calls for urgent action at European, national, regional and local level for a common objective: building tolerant and cohesive societies, where every one has a chance to succeed, where nobody faces discrimination and where fundamental values are shared by all.
- Point out that the declaration also acknowledges the challenges that European education systems face in terms of addressing diversity. But it goes a step further: it presents a clear vision of where we should be heading and sets concrete objectives.
- Point out that it is crucial to ensure appropriate follow up at all levels, and non-confessional and religious organisations have a key role to play in this regard. Stress the importance of their support in building tolerant societies, where people from diverse backgrounds and faiths can interact positively. We have to teach our children how to live together regardless of religious background. The common fundamental EU values should bridge the gap between different cultures and religions.
- Stress your personal commitment to take concrete action to support the Member States.
- With regard to young people in particular, stress that good education is a good start for forming open-minded citizens. But often not enough. The Declaration explicitly

acknowledges the importance of the participation of youth in society to strengthen social ties and generate a sense of belonging. And this is a common challenge for everyone who is in touch with young people, from the suburbs of Paris, Copenhagen and other European cities, to the most rural communities.

- Therefore, note your commitment to work closely with young people and to ensure their active involvement in democratic life, promoting inclusion and diversity. Point out that you will propose to dedicate a substantive part of our **Erasmus+** funding for this.
- Conclude that the ultimate objective is to reach down to grass-root level, teachers, schools, municipalities and that we count on everyone's support for this.