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I am terribly sorry for my last-minute dropping-out of the program in the Bahamas meeting. I was so excited with that trip and with the possibility of working with you that I am bound to think that some kind of a little "devil" played a trick on me !

Let me explain how things evolved preventing me from going. As you probably know the rightist majority ruling in Portugal since January 1980 has been on a unceasing cold war with me. Their most abject act in this regard has been a ban on my activity in Unesco, including my presence at its Executive Board. This has caused quite a lot of trouble in the political milieux in Portugal and was felt as "very strange" at Unesco.

This year, however, after the reelection of President Eanes (whom they attack on the most unconstitutional grounds), they attempted a smoother line of conduct. This included the





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acknowledgement of a short-time contact between Unesco and me. When I was in the States I was counting on a rapid visit to Unesco just to take leave "officially" of everyone. Once on the spot things appeared quite different to my appreciation. Members of the Secretariat and my own colleagues from all countries have been extremely kind to me and in a way "obliged" me professionally to stay longer as to make my withdrawal a normal gesture. As this represents a "victory" (small, of course, but real) of the left over the present majority in my country I could do nothing else but to stay here for a longer period.

Hence, my sudden impossibility to keep up with my commitment to the Bahamas meeting.

Fundação Cuidar o Futuro
I do apologize with all my heart for failing you and count on your understanding concerning the reasons which kept me here.

Maria de Lourdes Pintasilgo
Permanent Delegate of Portugal
to Unesco

