



HELENA VAZ DA SILVA AWARD CEREMONY
Gulbenkian Foundation, Lisbon, 23 October 2020

Text of the VIDEO MESSAGE from
António Guterres, United Nations Secretary-General

The presentation of the Helena Vaz da Silva European Award for Raising Public Awareness on Cultural Heritage to Cardinal José Tolentino de Mendonça comes as **a well-deserved recognition of one of the most influential intellectuals from our country and of our time.**

Poet and writer, theologian, university professor, the first Director of the National Secretariat of the Pastoral of Culture, Member of the Pontifical Council for Culture, and Archivist and Librarian of the Holy Roman Church - the scholarship, the cultural production and the career path of Cardinal Tolentino de Mendonça are remarkable at all levels.

What is most striking about Tolentino de Mendonça is the combination of his facets: as a **man of faith, a man of culture and as a connoisseur of human reality.** He has a singular voice that is heard by a wide and diverse audience. **Today, we honour not only the scholar, the high-level cultural leader or the author, but also someone who makes culture cross borders and universes, who inspires those who hear him and read him, regardless of their level of education or of the convictions that they have.**

I believe that in doing so, Cardinal Tolentino de Mendonça contributed to fulfilling a purpose that is also a motto of the distinguished entity of the United Nations - UNESCO: "Building peace in the minds of men and women". It is with great pleasure that I join this tribute that adds the name of Cardinal José Tolentino de Mendonça to a list of illustrious winners.

And as part of this tribute, I would like to ask a **question** to the winner:
How can culture contribute to the social friendship that His Holiness Pope Francis speaks of in the Encyclical Letter "Fratelli tutti"?

My heartfelt congratulations and thanks!