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## **Mandate**

At the Ninth Annual Meeting of the International Network on Cultural Policy (INCP) in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (November 2006), Ministers renewed the mandate of the Working Group on Cultural Diversity and Globalization (hereafter referred to as WG). Ministers agreed that the WG should, over the coming year:

1. Continue to play an active advocacy role in support of a timely and widespread ratification of the UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (the Convention);
2. Further the reflection on the implementation of the Convention and explore the complementary role to UNESCO that the INCP could have on this matter;
3. Continue to work with civil society and encourage their active participation in the promotion of the objectives of the Convention;
4. Explore and identify new and emerging cultural policy trends that may help guide the future work of the Network, among them the complexities existing between culture and the economy.

## **Progress to date**

Following the directions given by Ministers in Rio de Janeiro, the WG focused its activities on four main areas: (1) support the widespread ratification of the Convention; (2) develop an understanding of the implementation phase of the Convention; (3) continue to work with civil society; (4) identify a few key emerging cultural policy trends of interest to INCP members and suggest initiatives to deepen comprehension and share best practices.

### **Support the widespread ratification of the UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions**

In Rio de Janeiro, Ministers recognized the importance of a widespread ratification of the Convention in order to ensure that it has the necessary political and legal weight internationally. The effective geographical representation of member countries was identified as a key issue that needed to be addressed. As such, Ministers encouraged the WG to monitor the progress of ratifications and continue to effectively promote widespread ratification of the Convention at national, regional and international levels. This was accomplished through a variety of activities, including:

- Exchanging information and monitoring ratification processes at all meetings of the WG and through regular correspondence between member countries;
- Promoting the ratification of the Convention in key regions that are underrepresented, with a specific focus on Asia, Arab countries, and English-speaking African countries.

Two WG meetings and one special session were held in Prangins, Switzerland (February), Madrid, Spain (April), Paris, France (June) respectively. Each meeting allowed participating member countries to discuss the status of ratifications and exchange ideas on strategies to further promote the Convention in key regions.

Several members of the WG participated in regional meetings to promote the Convention (ie: Third Inter-American Meeting of Ministers of Culture and Highest Appropriate Authorities of the Organization of American States (November 2006), the Essen Conference on Cultural Diversity (April 2007) and the Organization of Ibero-American States' Ministerial Meeting on Culture (July 2007). Participants shared the valuable information received at these meetings with the WG. The Chair of the WG arranged meetings with officials from multilateral organization such as the Council of Europe, the *Organization de Estados Iberoamericanos* (OEI), the Organization of American States (OAS) and the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie (OIF) to promote the ratification of the Convention.

The Chair and other participants of the WG undertook targeted bilateral activities to promote the ratification of the Convention and reported back to the WG. Finally, the Chair of the WG wrote to INCP members from targeted regions encouraging them to ratify the Convention.

### **Issues for Discussion**

- Have these activities met the expectations of Ministers?
- Do Ministers wish for the WG to continue to actively advocate for widespread ratification of the Convention?

### **Develop an understanding of the implementation phase of the Convention**

In Rio de Janeiro, Ministers noted the important work that lies ahead at UNESCO with respect to the implementation of the Convention. Ministers mandated the WG to reflect on the main issues related to the implementation phase and discuss how the INCP can play a complementary role to UNESCO in this regard. This was accomplished through a variety of activities, including:

- Coordinating member countries' efforts and positions on matters related to the 1<sup>st</sup> Conference of Parties and the Intergovernmental Committee;
- Developing information material on key issues related to the implementation of the Convention;
- Exchanging information on cultural policy tools already in place in INCP member countries and that are in line with the spirit of the Convention.

During the Prangins WG meeting, a Swiss expert on UNESCO made a presentation on the intergovernmental bodies that will govern the Convention. Discussions were also held with UNESCO officials to provide member countries with a better understanding of the implementation phase. A representative from UNESCO presented on this issue during the Mid-year Officials Meeting of the INCP.

WG members identified two priority issues related to the implementation of the Convention that required further discussion and development among member countries, namely the International Fund for Cultural Diversity and the role of civil society. Canada agreed to produce an information sheet on the Fund, which summarized the different perspectives expressed by member countries while Switzerland produced an information sheet summarizing the viewpoints expressed about the role of civil society.

### **Issues for Discussion**

- Have these activities met the expectations of Ministers?
- Do Ministers have specific ideas with respect to the role of the INCP in supporting the work of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions?

### **Continue to work with civil society**

In Rio de Janeiro, Ministers recognized the important role that civil society has played in the promotion of the ratification of the Convention. Ministers mandated the WG to continue its work with international civil society to ensure that it can continue to play a complementary role to that of governments and INCP members in promoting the widespread ratification and implementation of the Convention.

Representatives from the International Network on Cultural Diversity and the Coalition for Cultural Diversity were invited to all regular sessions of the WG to exchange information and discuss the main issues related to the ratification and implementation of the Convention. In March 2007, representatives of the WG attended the Ninth General Assembly of the International Liaison Committee of Coalitions for Cultural Diversity held in Canada. The meeting provided an excellent opportunity to share information on ratifications and discuss ideas on the role of civil society in the implementation phase of the Convention.

### **Issues for Discussion**

- Have these activities met the expectations of Ministers?
- Do Ministers wish to see the WG continue this engagement with international civil society on matters related to the implementation of the Convention?
- Do Ministers agree that the WG should broaden the scope of dialogue with international civil society to include other international organizations?

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**Identify a few key emerging cultural policy trends of interest to INCP members and suggest initiatives to deepen comprehension and share best practices.**

In Rio de Janeiro, Ministers discussed new and emerging cultural policy issues of interest to their governments. Ministers invited the WG to explore and identify new and emerging issues that may help guide the future work of the Network, in addition to the work being done on the Convention.

During the Prangins meeting, the WG entertained fruitful discussions on specific areas of interest for consideration by member countries. Two emerging trends were identified and discussion papers were developed on Culture and the Economy and Youth and Culture, by Belgium and Canada respectively. Further discussions during the Paris WG meeting revealed interesting links between those two emerging trends and transversal issue of Intercultural Dialogue.

**Issue for Discussion**

- Do Ministers agree that the WG should pursue discussions on these two key emerging trends as they relate to the transversal concept of Intercultural Dialogue?
- In addition to these two themes, are there other cultural policy areas that Ministers would like the Working Group to explore further?

**Next steps**

With a view to complement ministerial discussions and further advance the reflections undertaken in Seville, the WG, the INCP's de facto committee of country experts that responds to Ministerial needs for research, consultation with international civil society, advocacy work, consensus building and promotion of cultural diversity, including, the Convention, requests a two-year mandate focusing on the following aspects:

*1. Support the work undertaken by the Intergovernmental Committee (IC) in the implementation phase of the Convention*

The activities that can be undertaken by the WG to fulfill this element of the mandate could include:

- Continuing to advocate for the widespread ratification of the Convention in an effort to ensure greater geographical representation among the Parties;
- Continuing to serve as an informal expert discussion group focused on highlighting and further reflecting on key priority areas that can be addressed by IC;
- Continuing to work with international civil society, both with organisations that have been regularly invited to exchange views with the WG on the Convention as well as other organisations that would bring diverse

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perspectives, which would benefit the work being undertaken during the implementation phase.

*2. Further explore the theme of Intercultural Dialogue with a view to contribute to the ongoing discourse on this transversal issue and highlight its importance as a key element in promoting social inclusion.*

The activities that can be undertaken by the WG to fulfill this element of the mandate could include:

- Exploring the multi-dimensional impact of intercultural dialogue, particularly its potential in promoting youth engagement; bridging socio-economic gaps through cultural cooperation and preventing social conflict (violence);
- Exchanging information, research and experiences on these issues with key international organisations involved in furthering the discourse on Intercultural Dialogue, such as, UNESCO, the Council of Europe, the Organisation of American States and the Organisation of Ibero-American States;
- Exchanging best practices for establishing intercultural dialogue as a permanent factor integrated in the development of public policy.
- Broadening the scope of dialogue with international civil society to include organizations that focus on youth issues, social inclusion and intercultural dialogue.

#### **Issue for discussion**

- Should the mandate of the WG be renewed to address the objectives mentioned above?