

Intergovernmental Conference on Cultural Policies for Development

Action Plan on Cultural Policies for Development

PREAMBLE

- 1. The Intergovernmental Conference on Cultural Policies for Development, held at Stockholm (30 March-2 April 1998),*
- 2. Reaffirming the fundamental principles of the Final Declaration adopted by the World Conference on Cultural Policies in Mexico on 6 August 1982, entitled the Mexico City Declaration on Cultural Policies, which stresses "that in its widest sense, culture may now be said to be the whole complex of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features that characterize a society or social group. It includes not only the arts and letters, but also modes of life, the fundamental rights of the human being, value systems, traditions and beliefs";*
- 3. Recalling that the World Decade for Cultural Development stressed the importance of acknowledging the cultural dimension of development; asserting and enhancing cultural identities; broadening participation in cultural life; and promoting international cultural co-operation;*
- 4. Conscious of the efforts needed to face the challenges of cultural development and preservation of the diversity of cultures, as expressed in "Our Creative Diversity", the Report of the World Commission on Culture and Development;*
- 5. Emphasizing the need to take account of universal values while recognizing cultural diversity, the importance of national measures to harmonize national cultural policies and the need to preserve the pluralism of grassroots cultural initiatives in order to promote mutual understanding as well as respect and consideration between individuals and nations in view of the risk of disagreements and conflicts;*
- 6. Recognizing that in a democratic framework civil society will become increasingly important in the field of culture;*
- 7. Considering that one of the functions of cultural policies is to ensure sufficient scope for the flourishing of creative capacities;*
- 8. Having regard to the ever more rapid processes of socio-economic, technological and cultural change, and the growing disparities at the national and international level, as well as the importance of respecting copyright and intellectual property in view of the risks and challenges arising from the promotion of cultural industries and trade in cultural products;*
- 9. Considering that the activities of UNESCO, as well as the development policies of Member States, should take into account the role of cultural factors;*
- 10. Taking note of the Declaration of the Conference of Ministers of Culture of the Non-Aligned Movement held at Medellin, Colombia, from 3 to 5 September 1997 and the Conclusions of the Panafrican Consultation on Cultural Policies for Development held at Lomé, Togo, from 10 to 13 February 1998, the meeting of ALECSO in Tunis in February 1998, the report entitled "In from the Margins" prepared under the auspices of the Council of Europe, and the "Pro Cultura" Charter adopted at Thessaloniki (June 1997);*

Recognizes the following principles:

1. Sustainable development and the flourishing of culture are interdependent.
2. One of the chief aims of human development is the social and cultural fulfilment of the individual.
3. Access to and participation in cultural life being a fundamental right of individuals in all communities, governments have a duty to create conditions for the full exercise of this right in accordance with Article 27 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
4. The essential aims of cultural policy are to establish objectives, create structures and secure adequate resources in order to create an environment conducive to human fulfilment.
5. The dialogue between cultures appears to be one of the fundamental cultural and political challenges for the world today; it is an essential condition of peaceful coexistence.
6. Cultural creativity is the source of human progress; and cultural diversity, being a treasure of humankind, is an essential factor of development.
7. New trends, particularly globalization, link cultures ever more closely and enrich the interaction between them, but they may also be detrimental to our creative diversity and to cultural pluralism; they make mutual respect all the more imperative.
8. Harmony between culture and development, respect for cultural identities, tolerance for cultural differences in a framework of plural democratic values, socio-economic equity and respect for territorial unity and national sovereignty are among the preconditions for a lasting and just peace.
9. Acceptance of cultural diversity helps to highlight and strengthen intercommunity links rooted in values that can be shared by all the different socio-cultural components of national society.
10. Creativity in societies favours creation, which stems above all from an individual commitment. This commitment is essential to building our future heritage. It is important to preserve and promote the conditions for such creation - in particular the freedom of the creative artist - within every community.
11. The defence of local and regional cultures threatened by cultures with a global reach must not transform the cultures thus affected into relics deprived of their own development dynamics.
12. We must therefore empower all people and communities to harness their creativity and to consolidate and forge ways of living together with others, facilitating genuine human development and the transition to a culture of peace and non-violence.

The Conference in consequence affirms that:

1. Cultural policy, as one of the main components of endogenous and sustainable development policy, should be implemented in co-ordination with policy in other social areas, on the basis of an integrated approach. Any policy for development must be profoundly sensitive to culture itself.
2. The dialogue between cultures should constitute a fundamental aim of cultural policies and the institutions which embody them at the national and international level; universal freedom of expression

is vital for this interaction and for effective participation in cultural life.

3. Cultural policies for the coming century must be anticipatory, responding to persistent problems as well as to new needs.

4. Effective participation in the information society and the mastery by everyone of information and communications technology constitute a significant dimension of any cultural policy.

5. Cultural policies should promote creativity in all its forms, facilitating access to cultural practices and experiences for all citizens regardless of nationality, race, sex, age, physical or mental disability, enrich the sense of cultural identity and belonging of every individual and community and sustain them in their search for a dignified and safe future.

6. Cultural policies should aim to create a sense of the nation as a multifaceted community within the framework of national unity - a community rooted in values that can be shared by all men and women and give access, space and voice to all its members.

7. Cultural policies should also aim to improve social integration and the quality of life of all members of society without discrimination.

8. Cultural policies must respect gender equality, fully recognizing women's parity of rights and freedom of expression and ensuring their access to decision-making positions.

9. Government should endeavour to achieve closer partnerships with civil society in the design and implementation of cultural policies that are integrated into development strategies.

10. In an increasingly interdependent world, the renewal of cultural policies should be envisioned simultaneously at the local, national, regional and global levels.

11. Countries should work together to build a world of intercultural communication, information and understanding, in which the diversity of cultural values, ethics and behaviours fosters a genuine culture of peace.

12. Cultural policies should place particular emphasis on promoting and strengthening ways and means of providing broader access to culture for all sectors of the population, combating exclusion and marginalization, and fostering all processes that favour cultural democratization.

13. Cultural policies should recognize the essential contribution that is made by creators to improving the quality of life, to promoting identity and to the cultural development of society.

14. Any cultural policy should take into account all the elements that shape cultural life: creation, preservation of the heritage and dissemination. A balance should be struck between these factors in order to implement an effective cultural policy, but promoting access to culture and its dissemination is impossible without maintaining a creative dynamic safeguarded by effective legislative protection.

Source: http://www.unesco.org/culture/laws/stockholm/html_eng/actionpl1.shtml