

## **IFCCD interventions (8)**

**14th meeting of the IGC – February 1 to 6, 2021**

### **Item 4: Secretariat's report on its activities**

#### **Beat Santschi, Swiss Coalition for Cultural Diversity and Chair of the IFCCD**

1. We'd like to congratulate the secretariat for its work under very challenging conditions, and notably the ResiliArt movement. ResiliArt has shown the great ability to make local reality visible, to make cultural workers' and artists' voice heard, and it also allows us to recognize the need for regional dialogues, not just national ones. This opportunity to dynamize the convention in the digital environment can allow for a greater regional and international dialogue between cultural professionals and artists.
2. We want to thank the bureau and the secretariat for this virtual format that allows civil society to take the floor.
3. Indeed, it has been a really tough year for everyone, but especially for artist, creators and professionals in the cultural sector. We wish to thank all the parties who designed support mechanisms for the cultural sector and the people working in it. And we appeal to maintain your engagement as the crisis goes on.
4. We'd like to recall that the International Federation of Coalitions for Cultural Diversity (IFCCD) has partnered with other international civil society organizations attending this meeting, like Arterial Network, the International Music Council, International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions, under the #culture2030goal Campaign, with the objective that Culture be recognize as the 4th pillar of sustainable development. Together, we released the #CultureCOVID19 statement, entitled 'Ensuring culture fulfills its potential in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic'. Many civil society organizations quickly announced their support for this campaign. This not only highlighted the need to support culture during the pandemic, but also on how culture could both promote wellbeing in the immediate term, and a stronger, fairer recovery in the longer term. This received noteworthy attention from various organizations, including UNESCO and the WHO, culminating in the excellent result of an endorsement by the President of the UN General Assembly.
5. We also acknowledge the numerous commitments for international cooperation and assistance programs as underlined under paragraph 9. We are still concerned by the many channels that were opened in the last years to accommodate the support of various entities. And although we welcome the initiative for an assistance program for the implementation of the Convention in the digital environment, we fear that this will not help the funding strategy for the IFCD. The importance of IFCD is diminishing and presents a difficult model to support.
6. Finally, we welcome the 3 new member states and hope that even more will join in the coming years.

## **Item 5: Preliminary analytical report on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the cultural and creative industries, and the findings of the ResiliArt movement**

**Nathalie Guay, General Secretary of IFCCD**

1. We wish to congratulate UNESCO for the creation of the ResiliArt movement. It has been an immense success, and it brought a lot of attention on the objectives of the Convention, the contribution of culture in peoples live, the conditions of artist, creators and professionals in the cultural sector.
2. We were happy to partner with the secretariat for the organization of the 2<sup>nd</sup> global ResiliArt conference, and to benefit from its support to facilitate the presence of UNESCO's Regional office for culture in Latin America and Caribe for our own ResiliArt conference on October 20 on the diversity of cultural expressions in Latin America.
3. The analysis of the creative industries as a whole results in a mixed form of very different types of work organization, too different to be analysed as a whole: musicians who live from teaching and informal contracts for concerts, orchestra musicians with formal contracts, theatre professionals and of dance that join ongoing projects, the edition and sale of books, the architecture that strives in the business world, design and marketing that are highly profitable and often organized in large companies, the fine arts that live from galleries and national or international markets, the pop and rock music industry with its festivals and stars, author cinema, animation and cinema for large audiences, etc.
4. The pandemic exposed existing problems. Especially, that the freelance nature of work in the cultural sector is not fit for purpose anymore. We truly hope that the crisis will provide for improvements in terms of social protection and living condition. We urge the Secretariat and the Parties to seek viable and creative solutions so that the precarious situation of cultural workers across the arts ends.
5. The pandemic will surely exacerbate inequalities at the local level, but also at the global level. While in Canada monthly cheques were distributed to all those whose jobs were affected by COVID and hundred of millions were made available by Canada and Quebec's government to support the cultural sector, in Paraguay, the president of the coalition coordinated the delivery of food provided by the Ministry of Culture to artists. The crisis we are witnessing in Latin America is of enormous depth, and, as in other parts of the world, social demands, salary, health, etc., are not being dealt with in an adequate and timely manner.
6. We can't insist enough on the need to accelerate the adaptation of cultural policies to the online environment. It is of course important to foster a dialogue with all stakeholders and seek contributions from the private sector, but that should support a roadmap based on cultural sovereignty, on the respect of intellectual property and equitable remuneration for creators, artists and cultural professionals.
7. Recognizing that culture is the 4th pillar of sustainable development would help to ensure that it occupies a better place in national policies, and that the sector participates in global efforts to achieve the SDGs.
8. There are lots of valuable Recommendations out of the ResiliArt process. We were happy to see "Urge communications authorities and broadcasters to commit to airplay of local content", as we were disappointed that measures offering relaxation of regulatory obligations such as lowering the requirements for national content for broadcasters were highlighted as good practices in the "Culture in Crisis" guide, an otherwise very good compilation of initiatives.

## **Item 7 to 11 of the provisional agenda: International Fund for Cultural Diversity**

### **Laure Gicquel, French Coalition for Cultural Diversity**

1. On 2020 there were 1,027 candidacies, only 6 were approved. This a ratio of 0,58%, much lower than any funding ratio in Culture. No matter how optimistic the document seems, and the growing number of National Commissions that have completed the pre-selection, results are really very low.
2. A parallel comment goes to the evolution of contributions, that despite the growing number of Parties contributing, the amount reached in 2020 was of roughly 600,000 USD, the third lowest. One of the difficulties in financing the IFCD is likely to be the degree of uncertainty about the destination of money.
3. There are many useful findings from the evaluation of the fund (item 9, paragraphs 22, 26, 27, 28). The challenge will be to fully reflect them in the future so there can be better impacts for the projects.
4. The IFCCD is encouraged by the greater participation from national commission, but is concerned by the lack of clarity around criteria at the national level for the selection of projects and low level of knowledge and visibility of the selected projects at the national level, on many aspects.
5. We are still concerned by the many channels that were opened in the last years to accommodate the support of various entities, as shown in paragraph 9 of the report of the secretariat. And although we welcome the initiative for an assistance programme for the implementation of the Convention in the digital environment, we fear that this will not help the funding strategy for the IFCD.
6. Civil society is deeply attached to the IFCD and wishes to contribute to the reflection for it's future. It would be relevant to dedicate time to this at the next civil society forum. If this doesn't provide for a timely input from civil society, we would suggest that the secretariat performs a consultation with civil society on the subject.
7. We suggest that embracing the global efforts for cooperation in the context of the Convention, and not only the IFCD, would provide for a better understanding of the limits and opportunities ahead.

## **Item 12 of the provisional agenda: Progress report on the implementation of Article 16 on preferential treatment for developing countries**

### **Mohamed Diakit , Malian Coalition for Cultural Diversity**

1. Without doubt one of the most neglected articles of the Convention by the developed countries, despite being a binding obligation. Let me recall that preferential treatment, also called special or differential treatment, departs from the general rule of international trade liberalization treaties in order to rectify structural inequalities between developing and developed countries. It intends to support, without reciprocity, cultural expressions from developing countries in order to expand their trade opportunities and establish a more balanced exchange of cultural goods and services worldwide.
2. As mentioned yesterday by the UNESCO Chair on the diversity of cultural expression, there is a lack of understanding on article 16, still after 15 year, which leads to a frustration from civil society.
3. Further more, it is a complementary measure to cooperation development that is even more important now, with the growing stress on resources, the impact of covid on artists, creators and professionals and the new obstacles to mobility.
4. Preferential treatment measures are not all about physical mobility and most of them can be applied in a digital environment.

5. It is to be hoped that the trend initiated in the framework of the EU-Caricom Economic Partnership Agreement will be transposed to other areas, because we are not especially encouraged by other regional agreements.
6. For instance, in the Asia-Pacific region, both the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement—RCEP, signed in November 2020, as well as the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership, are likely to impact the environment for cultural goods and services, the artists and cultural workers and their activities in the. The objectives of the Article 16 on the preferential treatment shall be addressed carefully in those frameworks for the region in particular.

**Item 13 of the provisional agenda: Synergies with the 1980 Recommendation concerning the Status of the Artist**

**Bill Skolnik, Canadian Coalition for the Diversity of Cultural Expressions**

1. Several Resiliart conferences emphasized the fundamental contribution of culture to mental health and our general well-being. But it is obvious that there is an enormous gap between the contribution of arts and culture and the living condition of the artists and creators. In many countries around the world, cultural sector workers are part of the informal economy but lack social protection.
2. Even in rich countries, the impact on cultural workers is beginning to emerge. In Canada, one in four workers in the cultural sector lost their jobs in 2020. There are 114,400 arts and culture workers who no longer make a living from their occupation. Fortunately, the Canada Emergency Response Benefit provided funds in support of these workers. The program deliberately offered relief to artists, but the future of these jobs might still be at stake.
3. Support measures vary greatly. Many governments have made significant resources available to support workers, in general, and the cultural sector in particular. But what will happen after the health crisis is over? Will a return to balanced budgets result in significant cuts in the cultural sector and provide little opportunity for new social security measures? In too many countries, arts and culture workers were abandoned to their fate.
4. In the Asia-Pacific, the percentage of artists detained, at 32%, was the highest around the world in 2019. With the pandemic, the rapidly changing geopolitical, economic landscape is affecting the status of the artists and their artistic freedom even more. An effort for awareness-raising of both the 2005 Convention and 1980 recommendation must be stressed in order to protect and promote diversity of cultural expressions and fundamental human rights by more focus on capacity building as well as strengthening international cooperation at all levels, CSOs and states.
5. In paragraph 16 of the report there is a reference to a panel entitled “Creativity without Fear or Favour. Towards Greater Collaboration Between the Press and Artists”.
6. I was privileged and honoured to be a member of that panel, representing the interests of the international labour organization UNI MEI and my own organization, the Coalition for the Diversity of Cultural Expressions for Canada. The panel emphasizes the notion of the 1980 Recommendation as a vital tool in the struggle for artistic expression not only for artists but for journalists as well. We urge your consideration of this aspect of the report.

**Item 14: Proposal for the establishment of an assistance programme for the implementation of the Convention in the digital environment:**

**Mane Nett, Chilean Coalition for Cultural Diversity and Vice-President of the IFCCD**

1. We recognize that such a program could be very useful, but it should be integrated into the broader reflection on the multiple channels for cooperation, including the IFCD. The proposal would also benefit from clarifications on how civil society can, directly and indirectly, profit from such a program.
2. Civil society in Latin America has taken advantage of the benefits of the development of digital environments to implement projects at the local, national and international levels, thus leading regional strengthening processes based on coordinated work with local experts in the framework of south-south capacity building and cooperation projects.
3. An example of this is the capacity building program in Spanish on the 2005 Convention, designed and operated by the Mexican CSO *Creatividad y Cultura Glocal A.C.* in coordination with the IFCCD and the U40 Network, carried out in November 2020, with the support of the German Commission for UNESCO, and in which cultural professionals and artists from Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, Mexico participated, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, and Uruguay participated.
4. The lack of capacity and of human and institutional competence is identified as a main obstacle to the implementation of the Convention in the digital environment, especially for the design, revision and implementation of regulatory frameworks, policies and measures. We recognize that this can be an issue but we should not underestimate the influence of economic interests and ideological points of view, as we have seen in the context of the European Copyright Directive, where Google spent 30 million Euros in lobbying to defeat the first version of the directive. To be clear, the implementation of the Convention in the digital environment is far from being only technical.
5. This argues all the more for multilateral approaches as proposed in the draft program, which allow for the development of concerted approaches between developing countries and the other under action 4.

**Item 15: Collaboration with civil society to implement the Convention**

**First intervention: Helena Vasques de Carvalho, Portuguese Coalition for Cultural Diversity**

1. We welcome the efforts of the Secretariat and the Committee to promote the contribution of civil society to the implementation of the Convention.
2. It rightly recognized that networking opportunities are important, particularly with other civil society organizations. To this end, putting the list of observers registered and present at the meetings of the Committee and the Conference of Parties online, truly a low hanging fruit, would allow civil society organizations to contact each other and facilitate their own coordination processes. We would like to encourage organizations from all sectors of cultural activity to join the works of civil society, in order to encompass the creative industries in a broad and inclusive way.
3. We look forward to engaging with our colleagues in the organization of the 3rd Civil Society Forum. We have been able to experiment with different approaches in the first editions, and I am confident that we will find an optimal way of working for the next forum and those that follow. We hope you will welcome the amendment proposed from Austria on this matter.
4. Most of us work with artists, creators, cultural professionals. We work to defend their rights and their conditions, we do advocacy work with governments to implement public policies, we

- negotiate, we organize events, trainings, we write reports, briefs. We mobilize our scarce resources to invest this space, which we also consider our own. We look forward to our constructive and responsible contribution.
5. We understand the need to have a clearer or easier communication with civil society, we try to maintain a good coordination between all of us. Like the parties and the members of the committee, we value consensus, and we respect the expression of diversity.
  6. We respectfully ask the members of the Committee not to define specific modalities for the preparation of future civil society activity reports, as suggested in paragraph 16. This is the only opportunity for civil society to report freely to the governing bodies of the convention and it would be important that a time be set aside for the parties to react to civil society reports.

### **Second intervention: Luanda Smith, Creatividad y Cultural Glocal A. C.**

1. Despite CSO's have been working world wide promoting the principles of 2005 Convention even before the existence of the Convention, it seems that is still needed to reinforce the capacity building processes to fully understand the 2005 Convention, its principles and values, to promote an active participation towards the protection and promotion of the diversity of cultural expressions. This is more important than ever now due to the crisis in the cultural sector, aggravated by the Covid-19, but also the new challenges that the so call transition to the digital environment represents for intellectual property, fair trade and of course diversity of cultural content.
2. In this sense we should keep into consideration that regardless of the greatest efforts CSO's make at the local level, language is still a real obstacle for many civil society observers, both for the meetings and the documents. To address this and to foster the comprehension of the Convention, the IFCCD / Mexican CSO Creatividad y Cultura Glocal A.C. / U40 Network designed and delivered an online training program in Spanish for Latin American professionals in the cultural sector. The quality of content and delivery of the 8 sessions offered in November 2020 was only possible thanks to the coordinated work with experts and the financial support of the IFCCD and the German Commission for UNESCO. We were able not only to deliver content but to connect with more than 200 new contacts in the region and start new CSO collaboration networks
3. In this program, which benefited citizens of 13 Latin American countries, it was reaffirmed:
  - a. The need to have support for the construction and permanence of cooperation networks with civil society organizations based on the recognition of Spanish as the unifying language of the region. This of course includes financial support for head costs and operation expenses
  - b. The need to have permanent training spaces delivered by experts from Civil Society that address the importance of the 2005 UNESCO Convention and its implementation at the local level.
  - c. The need to establish permanent contact with UNESCO's national and regional commissions to address local needs, build consensus and enable projects that strengthen the participation of civil society in international forums.