



IFCCD

INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF COALITIONS
FOR CULTURAL DIVERSITY

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Item 4 - Report of the Secretariat on its activities (2021-2023), read by Beat Santschi, President of the Swiss Coalition for cultural diversity

Hello,

My name is Beat Santschi, from the Swiss Coalition for Cultural Diversity and member of the IFCCD.

First of all, I'd like to pay tribute to the important work accomplished by the Secretariat, as reflected in the activity report. This period was still marked by the harmful effects of the pandemic, and once again we salute the responsiveness of the Secretariat, which organized essential debates and carried out important documentation work. Now that the pandemic seems to be behind us, we mustn't forget that the cultural sector is still recovering from its effects. The cultural sector has been profoundly disrupted and transformed by the pandemic, and we must continue to renew our efforts to support it.

Secondly, we congratulate the three new ratifications of the Convention, which bring us up to a significant 80% of Member States that ratified it. Nevertheless, some major states are still missing. We must continue our efforts in this direction. Moreover, beyond the rate of ratification, it is the actual implementation of the Convention that continues to give cause for concern, particularly with regard to Article 16 on preferential treatment, the submission of quadrennial periodic reports, the filing of digital roadmaps, the effectiveness of the IFCD and collaboration with civil society. We will be making recommendations to this effect during this session.

Item 6 - Collaboration with civil society and conclusions of the fourth edition of the Civil Society Forum, read by Alejandra Diaz, IFCCD Vice-President Americas

Hello,

My name is Alejandra Diaz from the Paraguayan Coalition and member of the International Federation of Coalitions for Cultural Diversity.

Today, I'd like to focus on various aspects of the collaboration between civil society and the Parties to the 2005 Convention. As you know, this collaboration is uniquely framed.

And while it would be desirable to seek to optimize it on an ongoing basis, we would like to state unequivocally that we see no need at present to revise the operational guidelines of Article 11, as proposed on the agenda. This position is in line with that of all our civil society colleagues who took part in the work of the 4th Forum. Nevertheless, if such a revision were to take place, which we would regret, we invite the Parties to actively involve civil society in this work, and the IFCCD would certainly make a major commitment to this.

Secondly, we would like to underline the excellent collaboration of the Secretariat with civil society in the organization of the 4th Forum. Providing interpretation in Spanish as well as English and French, and making the event a hybrid one, are two positive elements that responded to requests from civil society. However, to ensure the best possible governance and participation of civil society, we suggest that it is essential to devote more resources to this event, to enable interpretation beyond French and English in all sessions; to maintain a hybrid format; to make the plenary sessions more widely available; and to provide a resource to coordinate efforts. As you have seen today, the person appointed by civil society to act as rapporteur was unable to make the trip to Paris.

There are many obstacles to the participation of civil society, and we hope that Parties who can do so will work to minimize them, at the very least by encouraging hybrid participation wherever possible, but also by supporting bodies that facilitate the participation of civil society organizations in the work of the Convention. We would also like to thank the Parties that already contribute to the operation of organizations like ours, notably Canada and Quebec, as well as France.

Finally, we believe that consideration should be given to changing the date on which the Civil Society Forum is held, to enable the Parties to take better account of the recommendations arising from it.

Item 7 - Quadrennial periodic reports: transmission of new reports and proposal to rationalize their submission cycles, read by Holly Aylett, IFCCD Secretary

My name is Holly Aylett, Director of the UK Coalition for Cultural Diversity and board member of the International Federation of Coalitions for Cultural Diversity.

The International Federation attaches great importance to the periodic reports as a principal way to monitor and measure the effective implementation of the Convention and in particular to facilitate the role and engagement of civil society. Periodic reporting is an important opportunity for Parties to include dialogue with and input from civil society. We therefore welcome the measures taken by the Secretariat to help achieve these objectives. However we note that only two thirds of parties submitting reports in the last period included a dedicated civil society form. We also know from concerns expressed by our coalitions that compliance in this respect varies greatly between regions and nations. We therefore urge all Member States to ensure civil society is fully involved in the reporting process. Indeed, the IFCCD is concerned about the low rate, 24%, of overall compliance. We note in particular that 16 Parties have never submitted a report since

ratification. Others have only submitted a single report since first ratifying. This directly affects the opportunity and ability of civil society to contribute to its maximum potential in achieving the aims of this remarkable Convention.

Lastly, we are concerned as a matter of urgency, that periodic reports should invite parties to contribute evidence of ways in which culture is contributing to achieving sustainable development in line with the spirit and declaration of Mondiacult.

Thank you Madame President

Item 8 - Report on the implementation of the International Fund for Cultural Diversity, read by Vice President Africa, Mahamadou Adamou

I am Mahamadou Adamou, from the Nigerian Coalition and member of the IFCCD. The data presented in the report on the International Fund for Cultural Diversity are very worrying. A very small proportion of projects are considered eligible, and a tiny proportion of these receive funding. Unfortunately, this is nothing new. We applaud the Secretariat's efforts to increase the funds available. We also congratulate the 11 Parties who have contributed for the first time, as well as the seven Parties making contributions in excess of the suggested 1%, and the private partners.

Nevertheless, we would like to make an appeal to all parties. The number of applications submitted year after year to the IFCD, despite the more than discouraging approval rates, illustrates the scale of the needs and the need for each Party to contribute, and we invite them to do so. We also invite the Secretariat to keep a close eye on the allocation process to ensure that it is as fair as possible. Thank you all.

Item 11 - Report on the implementation of the Convention in the digital environment read by Bill Skolnik of the Coalition for the Diversity of Cultural Expressions in Canada

I am Bill Skolnik, co-chair of the Canadian Coalition for the Diversity of Cultural Expressions and member of the IFCCD.

Implementing the Convention in the digital environment is absolutely urgent for the survival of cultural ecosystems and the preservation of the diversity of our cultural expressions and linguistic diversity online. This is all the more true since the pandemic, which has radically accelerated digital transformation. But even more so, over the past year, we've seen the topic of artificial intelligence emerge in leaps and bounds. So we believe:

- that urgent action is needed to regulate Artificial Intelligence, both nationally and internationally
- that culture and the people who make it, the creators and their teams, must be at the heart of our reflections and actions on artificial intelligence.

Transparency, consent, fair remuneration, copyright protection: the legislative framework needs to touch on several fronts. In addition, the regulation of platforms to guarantee the promotion, discoverability and financing of content must become widespread. We therefore support the setting up of a think-tank on the diversity of cultural expressions in the digital environment, and invite the Parties to start work as a matter of urgency, so that swift action can follow.

Thank you.

Item 12 - Report on the implementation of Article 16 on “Preferential treatment for developing countries” by Parties, read by Kodjo Cyriaque Nougoussou, of the Togolese Coalition

I am Kodjo Cyriaque Nougoussou, from the Togolese coalition and member of the IFCCD. I'd like to thank you for giving me the floor on this subject of the utmost importance to our organization. Article 16 on preferential treatment, although the most binding, remains unfortunately the least implemented and the least effective, resulting in weak trade between South and South, in addition to other destabilizing consequences.

Allow me to remind you that preferential treatment makes it possible to derogate from the general rule of international trade liberalization treaties in order to rectify structural inequalities between developing and developed countries. It aims to support, without reciprocity, the cultural expressions of developing countries in order to expand their commercial opportunities and establish a more balanced exchange of cultural goods and services worldwide. Unfortunately, as the report shows, implementation of Article 16 to date remains largely a failure.

The development of digital trade, however, reinforces the importance of this article: preferential treatment measures do not only concern physical mobility, and most of them can be applied in the digital environment. As several economic agreements affecting digital trade are being developed and are likely to have an impact on the environment for cultural goods and services, artists and cultural workers and their activities in the region, the objectives of Article 16 on preferential treatment should be carefully considered.

Finally, we welcome the Secretariat's proposal to engage in further reflection on the implementation of article 16. The IFCCD intends to contribute actively to this process. Allow us to add that we hope that all future reflections on preferential treatment will take into account what emerges from the Fair Culture movement, initiated by the German UNESCO Commission and of which we are happy to be an active partner. We are enthusiastic about this initiative, and very much hope that it will help to revitalize and make more effective instruments that already exist but are struggling to achieve the effects they should, such as Article 16.

Finally, we followed with interest the Parties' discussions on the possibility of creating specific visas for artists. There are still many obstacles to the mobility of artists from certain

southern countries, and we encourage the Parties to continue seeking concrete solutions to overcome them.

Item 13 - Report on the decision of the Committee to encourage cultural organizations and institutions to promote access to a diversity of cultural expressions, read by Guillaume Prieur, President of the IFCCD

I am Guillaume Prieur, General Secretary of the French coalition and President of the IFCCD.

Back in February, we expressed our reservations about the initiative to encourage, within the proposed framework, cultural organizations and institutions to promote access to a diversity of cultural expressions.

First of all, of course, we understand and share the desire to promote the 2005 Convention. In fact, this is our primary vocation, and we devote all our energy to it. But we believe that the priority should be to support and strengthen existing mechanisms. For example, the IFCCD represents a wide variety of cultural players: creators, artists, producers, broadcasters and institutions, all of whom have been involved for many years throughout the world. We are a forum for consultation, bringing together multiple voices and promoting the participation of very representative and diverse players in the work of the Convention. Our mandate is already to publicize and promote the 2005 Convention, and to encourage the participation of civil society in the work surrounding it. In addition, as a representative of the French Coalition, I'd like to mention that among all the actions we undertake, we already award a prize for cultural diversity every year, and have been doing so for over 10 years. But our means to achieve these objectives are very limited.

We fear that this new initiative will monopolize the Secretariat's time and resources, unnecessarily disperse initiatives and thus weaken those that already exist, and ultimately overload the National Commissions, even though the ICOs are already represented among civil society. Nevertheless, if this initiative were to go ahead, which we would regret, we believe it would be advisable to set up an open appeal mechanism, with transparent selection and decision-making criteria.

Item 14 - Future activities of the Committee (2024-2025) read by IFCCD General Secretary Marie-Julie Desrochers

Madam Chairman, thank you for giving me the floor. I am Marie-Julie Desrochers, Secretary General of the International Federation of Coalitions for Cultural Diversity.

First of all, on behalf of my civil society colleagues, I would like to reiterate that we attach great importance to the 2005 Convention, and that we are committed to the practice that has been in force since its adoption with regard to CSO interventions, whereby we are invited to take the floor before the decisions of the Parties are taken. This, among other things, is what makes this convention unique, and we hope to preserve this fine specificity in the future.

Secondly, in line with the decision taken under point 6, we reiterate that we do not feel it necessary to revise the operational guidelines on the "Role and participation of civil society", relating to Article 11 of the Convention, and therefore believe that this should not be part of the Committee's future activities.

We would also like to emphasize the importance of finding a solution that will enable the Parties to take full cognizance of the recommendations arising from the Civil Society Forum. When you read them, you will see that civil society has suggested changing the date of the Forum, which could not be considered at this session - and which eloquently illustrates the need for this request to be taken into consideration as soon as possible.

Among civil society's key recommendations was a clear call for urgent action on artificial intelligence. We hope that the announcement of a working group on digital issues will enable us to respond to this request. But let's insist one last time: we need to act now.

Finally, in response to the points discussed under item 13, we confirm our willingness to engage with the Parties and the Secretariat in a reflection aimed at enabling better promotion of the 2005 Convention, particularly as we approach its twentieth anniversary, which represents an ideal opportunity to raise public awareness of its existence and importance. With the right support, civil society can play a major role in this, particularly by organizing events. We therefore hope that the member states and the secretary will include this consideration in the next action plan.