

18th Session of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions: IFCCD's Position on Item 7

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Item 7 – Recommendations of the Reflection Group on the diversity of cultural expressions in the digital environment : The IFCCD commends the remarkable work and encourages Parties to adopt the recommendations

The International Federation of Coalitions for Cultural Diversity (IFCCD) represents the voice of cultural professionals worldwide. It brings together some 30 organizations representing a diversity of creators, artists, independent producers, and publishers in the book, film, television, music, live performance and visual arts sectors.

Born out of an exceptional mobilization of civil society advocating for the adoption and ratification of UNESCO's 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (hereinafter referred to as "the Convention"), the IFCCD has made it its mission to coordinate civil society efforts to ensure the Convention's effective implementation at the national, regional, and international levels.

During the statutory meetings of the governing bodies of the Convention, the IFCCD plays an essential role in fostering the active participation and consultation of the organizations it represents. Additionally, it supports the actions of its members by organizing events that enable civil society to contribute to debates and initiatives impacting the diversity of cultural expressions.

The IFCCD was honored, alongside the Canadian Commission for UNESCO, to partner with the Coalition for the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (CDCE) in organizing a high-level [conference](#) preceding the first meeting of the Reflection Group on the Diversity of Cultural Expressions in the Digital Environment (hereinafter referred to as "the Reflection Group"). On May 27, 2024, this side event provided a platform for rich and constructive exchanges, highlighting the perspectives, concerns, and needs of international civil society while informing experts' reflections on the cultural challenges posed by the digital environment.

On December 16, the IFCCD welcomed with great interest the report of the Reflection Group and commended the exemplary quality of the work accomplished. Recognizing the undeniable relevance of the 2005 Convention in the digital environment, the experts emphasized the urgency of enhancing its effectiveness. To address this imperative, they formulated eleven concrete recommendations structured around four areas of action: (1) normative action, (2) exchange of information and good practices, (3) awareness raising and advocacy, and (4) capacity building.

The IFCCD expresses its support for all the recommendations made by the Reflection Group, particularly *Recommendation . Adopt an Additional Protocol to the Convention in the digital environment*

Recent international instruments regulating technology development, such as the [Pact for the Future](#), the Global Digital Compact, and the [Council of Europe Framework Convention on Artificial Intelligence and Human Rights, Democracy, and the Rule of Law](#), include encouraging provisions. These address the recognition of culture's role in achieving true sustainable development, the importance of international cooperation to ensure linguistic and cultural diversity, and the need to develop artificial intelligence (AI) based on respect for human rights. However, these instruments reveal a concerning gap: the lack of binding provisions to promote the diversity of cultural expressions and protect creators' rights.

The IFCCD acknowledges the complexity and technical, legal, and political challenges that this normative recommendation entails. Nevertheless, it is convinced that adopting an additional protocol to the Convention represents a pivotal step toward developing an international normative framework capable of safeguarding and promoting creators' rights in response to the growing challenges posed by AI, particularly generative AI.

Thus, the IFCCD calls on Parties to work closely with civil society to accelerate the implementation of the recommendations and ensure their effectiveness. In this regard, it strongly encourages the Intergovernmental Committee to incorporate consultation mechanisms with civil society, in line with Articles 11 and 23.7 of the Convention, at every stage of the process related to adopting the protocol.

However, the IFCCD stresses the importance of avoiding regional disparities in the implementation of such a protocol. In this context, it is imperative to promptly implement the other recommendations outlined in the report. Specifically, the IFCCD underscores the crucial importance of awareness-raising and advocacy efforts to foster dialogue and collaboration with civil society organizations on issues of cultural diversity. Similarly, capacity-building actions are essential to bridging the digital divide between the Global North and South.

Finally, the IFCCD fully supports *Recommendation 11. Strengthening UNESCO's action on AI and culture*. This recommendation calls for harmonizing UNESCO's efforts in this domain in alignment with the principles outlined in the [2021 Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence](#). Furthermore, the IFCCD encourages enhanced cooperation between UNESCO and other international organizations involved in AI to ensure the global application of the Convention's objectives and principles.

On the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the Convention, the IFCCD reaffirms its commitment to this fundamental instrument for the diversity of cultural expressions for current and future generations. Determined to address technological and political challenges, the IFCCD is committed to ensuring the Convention's sustainability in an ever-evolving world.