



9 IGC

Opening Ceremony

9th Intergovernmental Committee for the

Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions

14-16 December 2015, Paris

Speech of Mechtild Rössler,

Director of the UNESCO Division of Heritage

Excellences,

Mesdames et messieurs

Je suis très honorée d'être parmi vous ce matin, afin ouvrir cette 9^{ème} session du Comité Intergouvernemental de la Convention de 2005 sur la promotion et la protection de la diversité des expressions culturelles.

Ce Comité vient clôturer une année entière consacrée aux célébrations du 10e anniversaire de la Convention.

Partout dans le monde, au Brésil, en Belgique, au Sénégal, au Canada ou au Vietnam, les gouvernements et la société civile ont organisé des évènements marquants.

Ces évènements nous ont rappelé combien la diversité des expressions culturelles était reconnue aujourd'hui comme une source de créativité, d'innovation ainsi qu'une force d'inclusion sociale et de participation.

Les principes fondateurs qui sous-tendent la Convention n'ont pas vieilli : respect des droits de l'homme et des libertés fondamentales, accès équitable aux marchés des biens et services culturels, équilibre des échanges, complémentarité des aspects économiques et culturels du développement, coopération internationale.

Ces principes sont au cœur des défis auxquels nous faisons face collectivement. Nous devons les protéger les promouvoir.

Oui, les biens et les services culturels ne sont pas de simples marchandises, mais également porteurs d'identités et de valeurs.

Oui, les Etats ont un droit souverain de formuler et prendre des mesures pour la promotion de la diversité des expressions culturelles. Ce principe est particulièrement important pour les pays en voie de développement, dont les artistes et les industries créatives doivent avoir un accès équitable aux marchés mondiaux et contribuer à la richesse créative de notre monde.

Votre travail cette semaine consiste non seulement à dresser un bilan des perspectives d'action concernant la mise en œuvre de la Convention, mais, également à élaborer une vision claire du futur de la Convention.

Ladies and gentlemen,

We can certainly be proud of the hard won successes and accomplishments of the past ten years.

The Convention is growing ever stronger, now with 141 Parties, including the European Union. Though implementation of its provisions is a long-term endeavor, all the efforts of Parties and civil society in the past ten years are bearing results – and these are results that we can actually measure, report on, share and learn from.

Ten years is a good time to take stock. The Global Report monitoring the implementation of the Convention that we will launch during this Committee session is based on the Parties' periodic reports received so far, and additional sources. It is the first such report of any UNESCO Culture Convention. We wish to reiterate our thanks to the Swedish International Development Agency for supporting this new report, which shows not only how far we have come, but, under your supervision, it can serve to guide future implementation of the Convention as regards new issues such as the digital environment, the status of artists and artistic freedom.

This Convention paves the way of the future. Why? Because it is built on the creativity, innovation, and international cooperation that fuel sustainable social and economic development. It provides a solid framework to contribute to the 2030 UN Sustainable Development Agenda. According to the UNESCO Institute of Statistics, in 2013 the export of cultural goods worldwide, half of which originate in developing countries, totaled 213 billion USD. In the same period, cultural services such as films, music and downloaded books generated 129 billion USD. These figures translate into growing economies and jobs, as well as more intangible benefits such as social integration, means of expression, an enhanced sense of identity, dignity and well-being.

This Committee should take decisions that are grounded in evidence and initiative. For example:

- The 81 quadrennial periodic reports submitted by Parties demonstrating national cultural policies and development strategies, North-South-South cooperation and preferential treatment measures for artists and cultural professionals; this week you will review five new reports.

- The International Fund for Cultural Diversity, launched in 2010, with four cycles, provided approximately USD \$ 6 million in funding for 84 projects in 49 developing countries; this week you will review the projects recommended by the Panel of Experts and renew the membership of the Panel.

The global strategy for capacity-building adopted in 2013 has put in place useful operational tools. For example: an exemplary Convention Facility composed of international experts delivering technical assistance to Parties, which, thanks to support of the European Union, has worked to strengthen systems of governance for culture in 13 developing countries and changed the way development assistance is designed and delivered.

New training modules and materials have been produced on the Convention, as well as on policy making and implementation, on monitoring and reporting. They are being tested and will be finalized shortly with the lessons learned at the country level. These tools are supported with a knowledge management system which, thanks to support from Spain, makes readily available credible data, best practices, publications, and training materials to facilitate information sharing and cooperative networks and partnerships. Also with the support of Spain, the UNESCO Culture for Development Indicators have been applied in 11 developing countries that help introduce criteria and data collection to generate crucial statistics and information that measure the impact of the Convention while also feeding national development policies.

Numerous reports analyzing the implementation of Article 16 on preferential treatment and Article 21 on international consultation and coordination produced by the Secretariat demonstrate how over the years these issues have been gradually coming into focus with an increase in the mobility of artists from developing countries and agreements on audiovisual and cinematographic co-productions, five international trade agreements citing the Convention, and several regional cultural protocols have been negotiated that affect over 50 Parties to the Convention.

Reports and debates on digital issues, the manner in which they are impacting the creation, distribution and consumption of diverse cultural expressions and how equitable access and balance in the distribution of goods and services can be attained have helped prepare the Committee for their debates this week on a framework for Operational Guidelines.

This is just a snapshot of what we have built together.

Dear Committee members,

Although we have many achievements to celebrate, your work this week will have to address ongoing and new challenges, articulate your vision for the future, and set priorities for both. There is still much to do.

- While the creative economy is booming, developing countries claim a still-too-small percentage.

- Preferential treatment and international consultation and coordination need increased impetus and political buy-in, and this can only come from more data, awareness, and knowledge sharing, and deeper engagement with all stakeholders, including civil society and the private sector.
- Monitoring and reporting must improve to identify strengths and weaknesses and provide the data we need. Policy development and cultural governance require a more integrated approach. Here the call for capacity building must continue to be answered, and voluntary donations to the IFCD must be increased and made on a regular basis.
- Cultural industries require support and infrastructure, and creators need the space, opportunity, artistic freedom and support to ensure that the diversity of cultural expressions continuous to thrive.

In order to make head way in any of these areas, the engagement of civil society is essential. Partnership with civil society organizations, a unique feature of the Convention, must be bolstered.

I am certain that the next decade of the Convention will be as dynamic as its first; especially because this Convention can adapt to and integrate with emerging practices and trends in the culture sector. The future promises to be exciting.

Again, I would like to express our sincere thanks to the Governments of China, Italy, Republic of Korea, Spain and Sweden as well as to the European Union for their invaluable support to the work of the Secretariat, and our ongoing efforts to mobilize further financial support from Parties, donors and development agencies. Without this support, all the

achievements to build capacities for the implementation of the Convention around the world, especially in developing countries, would not have been possible.

I wish you all a very fruitful session.