

3148 (XXVIII). Preservation and further development of cultural values

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 3026 A (XXVII) of 18 December 1972,

Noting the existence in numerous countries of legislation for the protection of the artistic and cultural heritage,

Taking note with appreciation of the report of the Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization⁶⁸ on the subject of the preservation and further development of cultural values,

Considering that the preservation of national culture should not lead to a division of the world through the withdrawal of various cultures into themselves,

Affirming the sovereign right of each State to formulate and implement, in accordance with its own conditions and national requirements, the policies and measures conducive to the enhancement of its cultural values and national heritage,

Recognizing that the uniqueness of each culture derives from a multiplicity of influences operating in an extended time-scale,

Considering that the value and dignity of each culture as well as the ability to preserve and develop its distinctive character is a basic right of all countries and peoples,

Taking into account the rapid development of the mass media as one of the most important means of diffusion of scientific and technological progress and the increasing role of the mass media in the cultural and moral life of society,

Convinced that, on the one hand, intensified efforts must be made to prevent the misuse or abuse of scientific and technological developments, which endangers the distinctive character of all cultures, and that, on the other hand, all necessary steps have to be taken towards the preservation, enrichment and further development of national cultures and ways of life,

Convinced further that the preservation, renewal and continuous creation of cultural values should be not a static but a dynamic concept, linking the cultural heritage of nations with the present and future programmes of national development,

1. Urges Governments to make cultural values, both material and spiritual, an integral part of development efforts by giving attention in particular to the following:

(a) The fullest possible access of all people to places, buildings, facilities and institutions which serve as media of cultural transmission and form a system of ideas promoting national culture;

(b) The preservation and/or restoration of sites of special historical importance;

(c) Involvement of the population in the elaboration and implementation of measures ensuring preservation and further development of cultural and moral values;

(d) Wide education and information activity with a view to:

(i) Encouraging civic responsibility for the cultural heritage to enable every individual to absorb and use cultural values, both material and spiritual, as a means of advancement and development of his personality;

(ii) Making the public aware of the social and aesthetic significance of the cultural environment;

(iii) Enhancing and developing living values through free creative activity;

(e) The identification, preservation and development of the varied cultural values of each region in order to maintain and make the widest possible use of local aspirations in the implementation of development plans, especially as regards the improvement of living conditions and the general quality of life;

2. Recognizes that contacts and exchanges among various cultures, conducted on the basis of equality and with due regard to the principle of sovereignty of States, may positively contribute to the enrichment and development of national cultures and regional cultural values;

3. Appeals to all Member States to respect national legislation for the protection of the artistic heritage;

4. Requests the Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, in co-operation with Member States, to study all the legal implications flowing from the existence of legislation for the protection of the national artistic heritage, including problems of exchange and the voluntary return of various cultural works;

5. Recommends that the Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, taking due account of the work already done, should initiate, within the existing facilities at his disposal, the preparation of an interdisciplinary programme of research in education, mass communication and development planning, designed to preserve and further develop and promote wider knowledge of distinctive cultural values in this era of accelerated scientific and technological development, and, in particular, should:

(a) Assemble information on the above-mentioned problems in various social and cultural contexts;

(b) Promote the international exchange of information concerning the development and application of methods now employed by States for the preservation and further development of cultural values;

(c) Analyse the role of the mass media in the preservation and further development of cultural values, in particular with respect to integration of the mass media into national cultural policies;

6. Requests the Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization to report to the General Assembly at its thirty-first session on the progress made in the implementation of the present resolution;

7. Decides to include in the provisional agenda of its thirty-first session an item entitled "Preservation and further development of cultural values".

2201st plenary meeting
14 December 1973

⁶⁸ See A/9227.