



Ninth Iberoamerican Conference on Culture

Montevideo, July 13 and 14, 2006

“IBEROAMERICAN CULTURAL CHARTER”

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PREAMBLE

The Heads of State and Government of the Iberoamerican countries:

Taking account of the principles stated in the Declaration of the First Iberoamerican Summit held in Guadalajara, Mexico (1991), and convinced that “we represent a vast set of nations that share roots and the rich heritage of a culture founded upon the sum of diverse peoples, bloodlines and credos” and that our “aim of convergence rests not only upon a common cultural store, but also upon the richness of our origins and their plural expression;”

Reaffirming the importance of the instruments adopted and the actions undertaken in the realm of culture with a view to strengthening culture and broadening cultural exchange by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in matters of culture and, specifically, the principles stated in the “Declaration on Cultural Diversity” (2001) and the “Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions” approved in the city of Paris (2005) during the Thirty-Third General Conference of the UNESCO, especially articles 12, 13 and 14;

Recognizing and valuing the cultural development programs carried out by international organizations and regional cooperation mechanisms and especially the significant role played by the Organization of Iberoamerican States for Education, Science and Culture (OEI), as an organization for the development of cultural cooperation, likewise the functions that the Iberoamerican General Secretariat (SEGIB) has begun to perform to strengthen Iberoamerican cooperation;

Convinced that it is in democratic systems where culture and its management are best established and developed and that said framework permits the free creation of mechanisms of expression and ensures the full participation of peoples in culture, particularly the creators, bearers and recipients of culture;

Convinced also that culture must be exercised and developed within a framework of freedom and justice, recognition and protection of human rights and that the exercise and enjoyment of cultural manifestations and expressions must be understood as fundamental rights;

Considering that the exercise of culture, understood as one dimension of citizenship, is the basic element for social cohesion and integration and that it instills at the same time confidence and self-esteem not only in individuals but also in the communities and nations to which those individuals belong;

Aware that the process of globalization begins in deep inequities and asymmetries and develops within a context of hegemonic and counterhegemonic dynamics,

generating and deepening both challenges and risks as well as mutual, beneficial influences, in the cultures of the Iberoamerican countries.

Manifesting our specific contribution to other peoples and cultures of the world, in order to stimulate the construction of a culture of peace, centered on exchange, intercultural dialogue and cooperation for the achievement of better coexistence at the national and international level;

Highlighting that cultural diversity is a fundamental condition for human existence and that its expressions constitute a valuable factor for the advancement and well-being of humanity in general, which diversity must be continuously enjoyed, accepted, adopted and spread to enrich our societies;

Recognizing that cultural diversity manifests itself in identities that organize territories and symbolic worlds, identities inseparable from their heritage and from the environment where the goods or works are created, likewise their natural contexts;

Reiterating the principle of equal dignity of all cultures and the need to take preventive measures for the recognition, defense, promotion and protection of traditional cultures and the cultures of what are regarded as minority groups;

Recognizing the right that local communities and indigenous populations have to the benefits stemming from the use of their traditional knowledge and technologies;

Reaffirming that Iberoamerica manifests itself as a great system where unique, exceptional elements appear and that it is the holder of a common, diverse cultural heritage whose promotion and protection are indispensable;

Recognizing that Iberoamerican culture is diverse, plural, universally spread and that it represents a singular expression of peoples and is endowed with a great cultural richness, whose most significant manifestations include languages and their transformations as the product of a multiplicity of intercultural contributions;

Convinced that the dignification of indigenous peoples involves the recovery and preservation of their languages as a factor that strengthens their identities;

Stressing the strategic value of culture in the economy and culture's fundamental contribution to the region's economic, social and sustainable development;

Convinced that cultural activities, goods and services are bearers of symbolic contents and values that go before and beyond the strictly economic dimension;

Accepting the importance of intellectual creation and the need to balance the creator's right to recognition and fair reward with the guarantee of universal access to culture;

Recognizing that cultural diversity feeds and is promoted through free interaction and exchange under conditions of equality among all cultures, preferably by means of international cooperation;

Recognizing the presence of emerging cultures resulting from economic and social phenomena such as internal displacement, migrations, urban dynamics, the

development of technologies; cultures that stimulate the rise of new narratives and esthetics and reinforce intercultural dialogue;

Determined to contribute to the consolidation of an Iberoamerican cultural space, enriched by a wealth of experiences and by cooperation among the Iberoamerican States; and

Taking account of the Declarations issued by the Meetings of Ministers of Culture and Officials in Charge of Iberoamerican Cultural Policies; the terms accorded in the Declaration of San José de Costa Rica (2004), relating to “promoting and protecting the cultural diversity that lies at the base of the Iberoamerican Community of Nations” and to seeking “new mechanisms of Iberoamerican cultural cooperation, to strengthen the identities and the richness of our cultural diversity and to promote intercultural dialogue;” the terms accorded in the “Córdoba Declaration” (2005), where it is proposed to the Heads of State and Government of the Fifteenth Iberoamerican Summit to advance in the writing of a draft Iberoamerican Cultural Charter to strengthen the “cultural space common to our countries” and to establish an “innovative instrument of Iberoamerican cultural cooperation;” and the terms accorded in the “Salamanca Declaration” (2005), which decided “to draw up an Iberoamerican Cultural Charter that, from the perspective of the diversity of our cultural expressions, contributes to the consolidation of the Iberoamerican space and to the comprehensive development of the human being and the defeat of poverty;”

DECLARE:

I - GOALS

- to affirm the central value of culture as the indispensable basis for the comprehensive development of the human being and for the defeat of poverty and inequality;
- to promote and protect the cultural diversity that is the origin and fundament of Iberoamerican culture, likewise the multiplicity of identities, languages and traditions that make up and enrich Iberoamerican culture;
- to consolidate the Iberoamerican cultural space as a singular environment of its own, based upon solidarity, mutual respect, sovereignty, plural access to knowledge and to culture, and cultural exchange;
- to facilitate exchanges of cultural goods and services in the Iberoamerican cultural space;
- to provide incentive for bonds of solidarity and cooperation between the Iberoamerican cultural space and other regions of the world, likewise to encourage intercultural dialogue amongst all peoples; and
- to foster the protection and dissemination of the Iberoamerican cultural and natural, material and immaterial heritage through cooperation among countries.

II. PRINCIPLES

PRINCIPLE OF RECOGNITION AND PROTECTION OF CULTURAL RIGHTS

Cultural rights must be understood as fundamental rights under the principles of universality, indivisibility and interdependence. Their exercise takes place within the framework of the comprehensive nature of human rights, such that their exercise permits and facilitates, to all individuals and groups, the fulfillment of their creative capacities, likewise access to, participation in and enjoyment of culture. These rights are the basis of full citizenship and make individuals, in the social collective, the protagonists of the work to be done in the field of culture.

PRINCIPLE OF PARTICIPATION

Citizen participation is essential for the development of cultures in national realms and in the Iberoamerican cultural space. There must be regulatory and institutional frameworks facilitating said participation in all its manifestations.

PRINCIPLE OF SOLIDARITY AND COOPERATION

Solidarity among peoples and countries promotes the construction of fairer, more equitable societies in an Iberoamerican Community with fewer asymmetries.

Horizontal cooperation, based upon joint work and respect, is the privileged channel of the Iberoamerican cultural space.

PRINCIPLE OF OPENNESS and FAIRNESS

Cooperation must be facilitated for circulation and exchanges in cultural matters with reciprocity and fairness in the Iberoamerican cultural space.

PRINCIPLE OF MAINSTREAMING

In public activities as a whole, it is essential to take account of the cultural dimension may be therein involved, for the fostering of diversity and the consolidation of the Iberoamerican cultural space.

PRINCIPLE OF COMPLEMENTARINESS

Cultural actions and programs must reflect the complementariness existing between the economic, the social and the cultural, taking account of the need to strengthen the economic and social development of Iberoamerica.

PRINCIPLE OF SPECIFICITY OF CULTURAL ACTIVITIES, GOODS AND SERVICES

Cultural activities, goods and services are bearers of symbolic contents and values that go before and beyond the strictly economic dimension.

PRINCIPLE OF CONTRIBUTION TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, COHESION AND SOCIAL INTEGRATION

The processes of sustainable economic and social development, likewise cohesion and social integration, are only possible when they are accompanied by public policies that take the cultural dimension into full account and respect diversity.

PRINCIPLE OF RESPONSIBILITY OF STATES IN THE DESIGN AND APPLICATION OF CULTURAL POLICIES

States have the power and the responsibility to formulate and apply policies to protect and promote diversity and the cultural heritage in the exercise of national sovereignty.

III. REALMS OF APPLICATION

CULTURE AND HUMAN RIGHTS

The importance of reinforcing the role of culture in the promotion and consolidation of human rights is recognized, and it is stated that the design and management of cultural policies need to be put in line with the observance of, full respect for and validity of human rights.

It is moreover recognized that it is advisable to take affirmative action to offset asymmetries and to ensure the exercise of full citizenship.

TRADITIONAL CULTURES, INDIGENOUS CULTURES, CULTURES OF PERSONS OF AFRICAN DESCENT AND CULTURES OF MIGRANT POPULATIONS

Traditional cultures, indigenous cultures, cultures of persons of African descent and cultures of migrant populations, in their multiple manifestations, are a relevant part of the culture and cultural diversity of Iberoamerica, and they constitute a fundamental heritage for humanity.

To that end, it is in order:

- to take measures to foster the development of these cultures, and to guarantee protection, preservation, transmission;

- to promote the artistic and traditional elements of these cultures, knowledge of their values, technologies, uses and innovations, and to prevent these things from being misappropriated to the detriment of the communities to which they belong;
- to recognize the origins of cultural manifestations and the right to decide about their knowledge, innovations and practices;
- to guarantee adequate conditions for the enforcement of the principle of fair remuneration and an equitable distribution of the profits from the use of said knowledge, innovations and practices;
- to recognize the value and the diversity of the cultural heritage of indigenous persons, persons of African descent and migrant populations, for the purpose of facilitating their full participation in all levels of citizen life;
- to recognize the richness of the contribution of migrant populations to the process of interculturality in our countries; and
- to admit to the persistence of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and connected forms of intolerance in our societies and to reaffirm the need to combat them.

ARTISTIC AND LITERARY CREATION

Literature and the arts are the foremost expression of the Iberoamerican identities and the richness of our cultural diversity, and they represent an immense possibility of expression that must be stimulated.

Artistic creativity is a source of senses, of identity, of heritage recognition and enrichment, of generation of knowledge and transformation of our societies. Therefore the fostering of literary and artistic production, the enjoyment thereof by all citizens and universal access to education in the arts are fundamental.

CULTURAL AND CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

Cultural and creative industries are fundamental instruments for the creation and spreading of culture, the expression and affirmation of identities and the generation of richness and growth.

With the aim of guaranteeing more-democratic access to the goods and services that said industries generate and to a more balanced exchange and the dissemination of contents that express the cultural diversity of the Iberoamerican space, there is an inclination to:

- support and foster the production of cultural contents and the structures of distribution of cultural activities, goods and services in the Iberoamerican cultural space;

- establish mechanisms of cooperation that promote a distribution of its cultural goods and services in the Iberoamerican space and abroad, with special attention to the cinematographic and audiovisual sector, music and books;
- put together mechanisms that effectively enable the free transit of cultural goods in the region, with the firm goal of promoting to the utmost cooperation and mutual cultural enrichment of our peoples, by means of a fluid exchange of shows and exhibitions for non-commercial purposes;
- promote incentives and ways of cooperation for the transfer of technology and knowledge, which help strengthen these industries in those countries where less progress is registered;
- propitiate the development and exchange of statistics and studies on cultural and creative industries and other areas of the economics of culture; and
- favor accords for the shared production and distribution of cultural activities, goods and services in the Iberoamerican cultural space and endeavor to secure preferential access for countries that have incipient cultural and creative industries.

COPYRIGHT

Incentive and protection shall be provided for creations expressed in cultural, scientific and educational works, assuming that the rights of the creators, balanced with the guarantee of universal access to information, knowledge and culture, are sources of development and well-being in nations.

Alternatives shall be promoted to deal with copyright protection, the challenge raised by new technologies, massive access to and innovative forms of creation and dissemination of cultural goods and services.

CULTURAL HERITAGE

Cultural heritage represents long experience of original, unrepeatable ways of coping in the world, and it represents the evolution of Iberoamerican communities and therefore constitutes the basic touchstone of their identity.

The Iberoamerican cultural heritage is made up of both the material and the immaterial heritage, which must be the unwaivable object of special respect and protection.

Cultural and linguistic manifestations in traditional communities, indigenous communities and communities of African descent are part of the Iberoamerican cultural heritage, and their rights are recognized.

Protection of the cultural heritage through its recognition, transmission, promotion, and the performance of adequate measures needs the participation of society as a whole and is an essential responsibility of the public authorities.

The social appropriation of the heritage ensures both its preservation and its enjoyment by citizens.

With the object of recognizing and protecting the Iberoamerican cultural heritage, cooperation is promoted to avoid illegal trafficking in and exporting of cultural goods, likewise to recover illegally exported goods.

CULTURE AND EDUCATION

Because of the close relationship between culture and education, it is necessary:

- to reinforce, in educational systems, the knowledge and valuing of Iberoamerican cultural diversity;
- to propitiate, in educational plans and programs, the incorporation of thematic lines oriented toward stimulating creativity and the formation of critical cultural audiences;
- to incorporate contents of Iberoamerican history and culture in curricula, reaffirming its own identity-giving components, and to foster a regional perspective on learning;
- to propitiate, in zones where traditional and indigenous communities live, the incorporation of their respective languages, values and bodies of knowledge in educational plans and programs, with full social, cultural and regulatory recognition; and
- to ensure the right of the entire population to literacy and basic education, likewise to foster the cultivation of reading and access to books and to public libraries as centers of cultural promotion.

CULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

Culture, nature and environment are intimately related. To strengthen this relationship, it is necessary:

- to foster the culture of sustainability.
- to coordinate measures for protecting and valuing the environmental heritage and the cultural heritage.
- to promote the valuing of the environment as an integral part of the cultural heritage.

CULTURE, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Iberoamerican cultural development requires the strengthening of science and technology in the region, from a solidary standpoint, to the benefit of the general interest.

To that end, it is in order:

- to promote and strengthen national and regional policies and Iberoamerican cooperation for the fostering and dissemination of research in science and technology;
- to facilitate access to technological innovations and their benefits for all population sectors; and
- to promote the development and use of new technologies as opportunities of creation, production, dissemination and promotion of cultural goods and services, likewise their contribution to the formation of new audiences and cultural exchange among countries.

CULTURE AND COMMUNICATION

The communications media are stages for creation and important channels for the dissemination and fostering of cultural diversity. Thus:

- plural access to communications technologies and media must be promoted for communities and social groups;
- the creation of communications media must be favored in the Iberoamerican realm for the expression of the different cultural manifestations in the region and in the world:
- the value of the media's mission as a cultural public service must be recognized; and
- the development of citizen and community media must be fostered, to stimulate dialogue among local communities and enrich the presence of diversity in the public sphere.

CULTURE AND SOLIDARY ECONOMICS

Actions shall be promoted to support the creation, production and circulation of cultural goods and services within the sphere of solidary economics.

Public policies on culture must recognize these creations in all their dimensions, generating conditions for their development, promoting their valuation and recognition, at the national level, in the Iberoamerican cultural space and in their relationship with other regions of the world.

CULTURE AND TOURISM

The relationship between culture and tourism involves new actions, given the growth of cultural objectives and interests in tourism services. This relationship generates challenges and risks that require heritage protection. Moreover it produces opportunities that must be take advantage of, for which:

- tourist activities must treat traditional cultural expressions with respect and care, preserving their authenticity;
- the benefits of tourist activities must contribute to the sustainability of both material and immaterial cultural expressions; and
- the planning of public policies on culture must address the dynamics of the tourist sector.

IV. IBEROAMERICAN CULTURAL SPACE

Iberoamerica is a dynamic, singular cultural space; in it are recognized a considerable historical depth, a plurality of origins and varied manifestations.

The consolidation of an Iberoamerican space that recognizes the multiplicity of nuances means voices engaged in dialogue with other cultures.

It is necessary to strengthen regional structures of cooperation with the goal of creating better conditions for the incorporation of Iberoamerica in the global scene.

Within this framework the affirmations, ideas and values consecrated in this Cultural Charter shall be promoted as guidelines in the construction of an Iberoamerican cultural space.