



Address by Irina Bokova,

Over the last 10 years, we have built tremendous momentum for the promotion of cultural diversity, building on a clear vision that is now shared and promoted by some 139 states, and counting...

This vision has three angles:

- First, cultural goods are not mere commodities or objects of trade -- they have both an economic value and a cultural value.
- Second, it is the sovereign right of States to devise, adopt and implement measures to promote the diversity of cultural expressions.
- Third, the protection and promotion of cultural diversity is a joint effort by States and civil society working together. States cannot sustain and foster a truly vibrant cultural sector on their own -- it takes artists, entrepreneurs, and a suitable environment to let them create.

Building on this vision, we have moved forward across the board.

We have adopted a global strategy for capacity-building.

Several sets of Operational Guidelines have been approved to support Member States in adopting efficient policies.

The International Fund for Cultural Diversity is now funding some 80 programs around the world -- 20 percent of which are directly benefit youth.

We have attracted major donor partners -- notably Spain, Italy, the European Union, and the Swedish International Development Agency or SIDA, and I wish to take this opportunity to thank all of our partners once again for their generous support.

With the support of the European Union, we have created an Expert Facility, to assist 13 developing countries to strengthen their national policies and action plans for the development of their creative industries.

This has had tremendous impact on the ground, at the policy level, changing the way development assistance is designed and delivered, from Vietnam to the Seychelles, from Niger to Cambodia.

I was pleased to share these results with European Commissioner Mimica last Friday in Brussels, at a Conference on Culture and Development, in the presence of many delegations, artistes and representatives of the civil society, and I am confident we will soon launch a second phase of this important work.

What is most important is that beneficiary countries are not passive recipients -- they are active partners – Brazil, for example, received funding and shares best practices gained from its projects, now contributing to the Fund for Cultural Diversity.

Some 80 Parties have submitted reports on the manner in which the Convention is being implemented -- this is a wellspring of good practices to harness the power of the cultural sector.

New Zealand has adopted simplified procedures for obtaining a visa for artists.

Denmark adopted a new national strategy on the Right to Arts and Culture.

A number of European trade agreements now refer to the Convention.

We have developed concrete evidence on how culture drives sustainable development.

The most recent data from the UNESCO Institute for Statistics on the flow of cultural goods and services show that the share of cultural goods being imported from the EU has increased from 0.529 to 0.594.

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