



International Development and the Diversity of Cultural Expressions

How can UK and Commonwealth approaches to development benefit from UNESCO's groundbreaking new Convention on the Protection and Promotion of Diversity of Cultural Expressions (2005)?

Seminar hosted by the Commonwealth Foundation in partnership with the UK Coalition for Cultural Diversity and London Metropolitan University's Global Policy Institute

**Marlborough House, London
Thursday 6 November 2008**

On 6 November 2008, 64 delegates from the culture and development sectors and from government and civil society came together at Marlborough House, the Commonwealth's headquarters in London, to discuss the significance and importance to development of the 2005 UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions.

After hearing a range of perspectives from different sectors and regions, participants in the seminar discussed how the Convention can be integrated at all levels in UK and Commonwealth approaches to international development.

Summary of perspectives

1 **Culture, cultural policy and development in the Commonwealth**

Mark Collins, Director, Commonwealth Foundation

For the Commonwealth Foundation, the 2005 UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions is a key arena for engagement between civil society and government on issues of culture. The Convention promises an enormous amount. It affirms the right of states to use cultural policy to protect and promote their own cultures, while engaging in equal dialogue with other cultures. It also makes the argument that cultural products and forms of cultural expression cannot be subject to the same rules of trade liberalisation that apply to other industries. It tells us that culture and creative works are special and something we need to invest in and nurture.

The Convention also connects culture with development and international co-operation, and recognises the critical role that civil society can play in protecting and promoting the diversity of cultural expressions. As an intergovernmental organisation mandated to support civil society involvement in the pursuit of Commonwealth development goals, as well as being the Commonwealth's culture agency, this is welcomed by the Commonwealth Foundation.

In November 2007, over 1,500 representatives from 600 civil society organisations came together at the Commonwealth People's Forum in Kampala, Uganda to make their voice heard to member governments ahead of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting. For the first time, culture and its role in development were discussed. The 2005 Convention arose as a particular area of concern for civil society organisations and, in *Realising People's Potential: The Kampala Civil Society Statement*, civil society urged member governments to ratify and implement it.

In March 2008 the Commonwealth Foundation hosted, with the support of the Québec Government Office in London, a seminar on how the Commonwealth and La Francophonie can share strengths and experiences to make the most of the Convention. While Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie members are well ahead of Commonwealth countries in terms of ratification of the Convention, Commonwealth experiences with civil society can still offer much to the Francophonie.

Article 16 of the Convention explains that "developed countries shall facilitate cultural exchanges with developing countries by granting, through the appropriate institutional and legal frameworks, preferential treatment to artists and other cultural professionals and practitioners, as well as cultural goods and services from developing countries." This is a crucial part of the Convention and makes clear that it can and should be used as an instrument for development.

The Convention also makes a wider commitment to recognising the value of culture in development processes that goes beyond the parameters of the Convention itself. Research brought together in the Commonwealth Foundation's recent report *Putting Culture First* clearly demonstrates the need to appreciate and develop these connections. There are numerous links between culture and development. Creative industries, for example, can generate economic growth, but there is a corresponding

need to ensure that the benefits of this growth reach the right people and contribute towards sustainable livelihoods for cultural practitioners. Cultural expressions can also contribute enormously in building social cohesion, helping people to negotiate and express their identities, and fostering an environment of respect and understanding. Nevertheless, the design and support for strong cultural policy frameworks is a key component in making the most of culture and development, and debate on these issues at a Commonwealth level is much needed.

2 Promoting the objectives of the Convention as an instrument for development

Holly Aylett, Director, UK Coalition for Cultural Diversity

The Convention is a groundbreaking instrument, initiated through partnership between developing and developed countries. As of November 2008, there were 93 signatories to the Convention in total. However, if the Convention is to gain the sort of legitimacy enjoyed by initiatives such as the Kyoto Agreement, then this number will need to rise closer to 150. The International Federation of Coalitions for Cultural Diversity (IFCCD), as a unique coalition of civil society experts and practitioners, can offer expertise and support for governments in the design of cultural policy. The UK Coalition for Cultural Diversity is the UK's national chapter of the IFCCD.

Article 13 of the Convention maintains that “countries should integrate culture into development policy at all levels”. This comes at a critical time, during which governments are facing new challenges. In particular, there has been limited progress in achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Development strategies driven principally by economics have failed to resolve poverty, and there is increasing recognition that development must also be about choice, and about human dignity. The Convention is important in this regard because it recognises first and foremost that cultural products must be protected from the arbitrariness of the free market. It calls into question the role played by bilateral arrangements, in which national interests in the development of the cultural sector have often been overlooked. For example, South Korea recently abandoned a successful 40% indigenous quota system for their film industry in the interests of negotiating a new agreement with the United States of America.

The Convention, though, is also about enabling local communities to tell their own stories in their own images, words and gestures. It is about people expressing their identities within their own idiom. Social stability, good governance and conflict resolution can all prosper as a result, and these goals are central to development practice. Articles 12, 14 and 16 of the Convention specifically offer recognition that development is one of its main goals. The Convention also recognises that partnerships, both between countries and between civil society, government and the private sector, are crucial, for example in supporting indigenous creative industries. However, creative industries alone, or success in the creative economy, particularly without regulation, will not guarantee this diversity.

Civil society must be involved in initiatives to protect and promote the diversity of cultural expressions, and Article 11 of the Convention calls on signatories to facilitate structures for this exchange to take place. It is no coincidence that, for the first time at UNESCO headquarters, civil society was formally consulted at the Intergovernmental Committee Meeting in June 2008.

The success of the Convention will require all those interested in international development - at local, national, and global level, and in government and in civil society - to get behind it, and in doing so to listen openly to voices and concerns from the developing world. Furthermore, there is an obligation to make resources and expertise available to people of the developing world. Such support might help to promote the concept of a diversity of cultural expressions as a fundamental human right, rather than a luxury.

3 ***A perspective from the UK National Commission for UNESCO***
Professor Sir Alec Boksenberg, Chair, UK National Commission for UNESCO

The UK National Commission for UNESCO is an independent body, with a grant from the UK government, which was set up by government and civil society as the focal point for policy and programme work related to UNESCO.

In the 2008/2009 biennium one of UNESCO's principal priorities is protecting and promoting the diversity of cultural expressions through the implementation of the 2005 Convention, and through the development of cultural and creative industries. This activity stream includes work on accession of member states to the Convention and the development of creative industries.

At the final negotiations of the Convention in 2005, the UK played a valuable role, not least because it then held the presidency of the European Union. The UK, involved and supportive from an early point, was able to drive forward the common European position. Particularly, the UK helped to address the USA's concerns about how the Convention could conflict with trade agendas.

Culture has not been a priority for the UK's Department for International Development (DFID). DFID has had little engagement with the Convention since ratification, and focussed instead on what it considers to be mainstream development issues, such as health and education. The Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) became the lead body on the Convention, and there has been little involvement from other government departments in Whitehall.

There is, however, significant room for DFID and other aid donors to incorporate the Convention. The Commission for Africa Report, for example, mentions culture explicitly in various ways. It says that 'culture' does not simply mean expressions such as literature, dance, and music, but that it is also about shared patterns of identity, symbolic meaning, aspiration, and about the relationships between individuals and groups within that society. Culture is also about the relationships between ideas and perspectives, and is part of the human being. In order to promote aid for genuine development, we have to understand this too. Increasing attention needs to be given to development assistance on cultural matters and on this, the aid donors are not currently delivering.

4 *The Convention in European Union policy: facilitating creative exchange with developing countries*

Ruth Hieronymi, Member of European Parliament, Germany

The UNESCO Convention is extremely important for the European Parliament as a step forward in the long journey to putting cultural rights on a par in international law with economic, social and political rights.

All three European Union (EU) institutions – the EU Council, the Commission and the Parliament - give strong support for the UNESCO Convention. However, there is one difference. The Council and the Commission are asking for the strong and quick implementation of the Convention in external and international relations and policies, and this is agreed upon. But at the same time, the European Parliament perceives that this cannot happen properly without integration of the Convention into internal European dynamics and policies.

On 15 and 20 October 2008, the EU and 14 Cariforum countries signed an Economic Partnership Agreement, including a new and groundbreaking Protocol on Cultural Cooperation. This had involved intensive and difficult work since 2005. It is a promising start, which should be followed by further EPA cultural protocols in relations with other developing countries.

Inside the European Parliament, MEPs are working to implement the Convention. One example of this is the EU system to encourage the production of European programmes and their broadcast across frontiers, which initially encouraged purely European audiovisual production. For the first time since the Convention, it has been possible to open these provisions to 'third countries', i.e. those from outside the EU. In December 2007 this directive, *Television without Frontiers*, was revised. There will now be a new definition of 'European works', a term which is now taken to mean not only audiovisual products produced in Europe but also those 'works co-produced within the framework of agreements related to the audiovisual sector concluded between the Community and third countries'. This corresponds to the Protocol on Cultural Cooperation, and helps implement the Convention. For example, European and Caribbean co-produced works now stand to benefit from this arrangement through easier access to EU markets.

Questions remain as to how the Convention will be used in the future. There are certainly new challenges, for example, what to do with online creative content on the internet. There is a need for regulatory instruments and models in this area, and it is still uncertain how the Convention will be used in these emerging fields. As these and other developments progress, it will be critical at a European level not only to implement and integrate the Convention in external relations, but also internally within European law where it is currently underrepresented.

5 Local government and diasporas: promoting diversity of cultural expression and supporting the creative industries

Jennette Arnold, Chair, London Assembly

London had regional government returned to it in 2000, and there are six competency areas for which it is responsible: transport, police, fire and emergency, environment, culture and economic development.

Of these, culture is the only one strategic line without its own budgetary source. There are, however, resources available in other areas: the Art on the Underground exhibition space with Transport for London (TfL), for example, is one of the largest in the country. The London Development Agency (LDA) works in partnership with other bodies, for example to develop initiatives in film with Film London. The LDA works more widely on integrating the creative industries into economic development.

It is sometimes also forgotten that local borough-based government is one of the largest funders of culture-based activities. This may be overlooked because they do not have a statutory basis for funding culture. Within the UK, regeneration looks to address challenges of isolated communities and of social exclusion, and this links with the international dimensions of ethnic minorities and diasporas. It is also in such communities where many potential practitioners have given up their chosen field because they find themselves in very difficult circumstances.

London's cultural strategy is now under review under a new Mayor. Despite this, there are some key components that will continue to be a part of it. The Mayor will continue to provide leadership to support cultural expression. Previous work around ethnic identity, and around enabling groups to articulate their heritage, will continue. The Mayor is also required to continue to integrate culture into the other areas of competency, such as transport.

One initiative exemplifying some of this work is the Black Filmmakers' International Festival. This has been held every year for the last ten years, and is a story of great success. Audiences have grown year on year. The festival was established to address the absence of black cinema in the UK, and within the African and Caribbean communities, audiences for these films are huge. Initiatives such as these support cultural expression. They enable cultural practitioners to have a showcase event and go on to gain support from wider regional or international funding initiatives, as well as helping people to reflect on their countries of origin.

Local government, national government, and European government are all important parts of the big picture. If they work together, cultural expression can not only bring economic benefits, but also goodwill, community development and social integration.

6 ***Meeting the challenge to protect and promote our Caribbean culture***
Vynnette Frederick, Secretary Treasurer, Caribbean Copyright Link Saint Vincent and the Grenadines Steering Committee

It is important to recognise the reality on the ground in developing countries. There are reasons why the Convention has not gained the traction that it should have in the Caribbean. The reality for Caribbean creative industries is that the people who are best positioned to benefit from creativity lack knowledge, including about the Convention. The region does not yet grasp the full potential of their creative sectors, nor the need to organise formally to take action around these issues. The Caribbean Copyright Link, elected by cultural practitioners, music producers and performers, came together because of the need to formalise itself as an association. As a formal entity, it is easier to speak regionally, have credibility, and make the most of developments such as the Economic Partnership Agreements.

Music has value. Caribbean music is at the forefront, and the region is most often heard because of the music sector. Music is well ahead of film, visual arts or dance, and these other sectors are not capable of quite the same level of economic success. Governments can see that creativity in music can drive economic gain, and this is critical in efforts to get them to take the creative industries seriously. If cultural practitioners can get their foot in the door through music, then other sectors will also benefit in the long run.

There are numerous challenges for Caribbean creative industries. The focus on the music sectors means that other creative industries rarely get attention. There are difficulties in defining 'culture' and even the 'creative industries', and no uniform idea of how to define culture in order to persuade governments to give access to sustainable funding which recognises the long-term human value of culture. There is an absence of real public support for cultural practitioners on issues of piracy. The public like music, but they do not like to pay for music. Addressing piracy at the political level can therefore be difficult and unpopular, and politicians rarely do much to see that piracy laws are properly implemented. Finally, there is a notable absence of cultural policy, for example in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and little sign that there is the political will or prioritisation to redress this situation.

The creative sector in the Caribbean therefore urgently requires capacity building of civil society organisations and cultural practitioners in the industry. There is also a need for education. First, education is needed to train the enforcers of copyright legislation. Second, education is needed for artists and producers who stand to benefit from the Economic Partnership Agreement and the Convention, in order that they can realise what is at stake and organise themselves around these issues. Finally, higher education opportunities are needed for those who manage the industries. If the political lobby is strengthened, then this will help to influence government and begin to generate political will.

There is a need for us all to help strengthen civil society. Messages must not be imposed if they are to be effective, and civil society will be critical as a middle man in helping to translate and communicate the importance of the Convention if it is to be acknowledged by those on the ground. Now that the EPA has been signed, people are increasingly realising the need to form formal groups if they are to benefit, and helping others to understand the arena in which they operate can only accelerate this.

Key points arising from discussion

1 Agencies, donors and approaches to international development

Current strategies and approaches to international development often lack an understanding of the value of cultural expression. Access to cultural expression is a fundamental human right, and enabling people in developing countries to have access to their own and other voices is a moral imperative outlined in the Convention. One perspective of human development understands 'choice' as a central element, and protecting and promoting the diversity of cultural expressions speaks to this need for 'choice'. There is a sense then in which international development strategies should incorporate the promotion of a diversity of cultural expression as a valuable objective in itself.

The Convention also seeks to realise the potential of cultural expression as a tool in achieving other forms of development. The creative industries are increasingly being acknowledged as an economic sector with enormous potential for growth. The Convention explicitly seeks to harness this potential as an option for the economic development of developing countries. With the level playing field of a fair market in cultural products, goods and services outlined by the Convention, developing countries stand to benefit from their resources of human creativity by finding niche markets for diverse cultural expressions. There is a need to ensure that the economic benefits of creative industries are felt not only by the most marginalised countries, but also by the individuals most in need. In particular, there is an ongoing need, in all countries, to ensure that the benefits reach cultural practitioners and creators.

The Convention, which supports these aims, should therefore be closely considered by international development agencies and donors with a view to its integration into long-term strategies. For example, DFID has rarely engaged with the Convention since it was ratified by the UK. Nevertheless, DFID does acknowledge in various forms, notably in the Commission for Africa report, the importance of culture in development. There exists scope for such agencies and donors to do more to incorporate recognition of the role played in development by culture and creative works and the importance of promoting a diversity of cultural expressions. This recognition should be built into their strategies.

2 Partnerships

The Convention places a special emphasis on the role of partnerships in its implementation. There is potential here for partnerships to be built to share experience, expertise and resources. For example, different associations such as the Commonwealth and La Francophonie can come together at an international level to discuss and share experiences and potential partnerships. Similarly, at a regional level there is a need for countries to cooperate to protect and promote the diversity of cultural expressions, and there may be leadership roles for those countries which have taken an early lead on these issues. South-South partnerships should be encouraged and supported, while there is also a role for donors and international development agencies in the North to play in supporting these partnerships.

Much work is already being done around issues of the diversity of cultural expression, but the dots are often not joined up. The debate at the UNESCO level lacks a connection

to popular sentiment or understanding, and one of the principal problems in the Convention's future success may be in getting cultural practitioners and those who seek to benefit from it to fully understand its implications and how it can practically deliver. Therefore, making the linkages between this debate and others (such as the Slow Food Movement) might be important in reaching wider audiences. Similarly, there has been significant work already done around promoting the role of culture in development. In particular, the World Commission on Culture and Development (1995), the Intergovernmental Conference on Cultural Policies for Development (1998) and the World Summit on Sustainable Development (2002) all firmly acknowledged the role of culture in development. However, little has arguably changed in terms of translating these statements into practical action. A primary concern might therefore be to make connections and join up the dots between efforts in this area in order to achieve better coordination.

3 The creative economy and trade

The Convention has a strong focus on the creative industries and trade. The Convention emphasises the potential of strong cultural policy frameworks in supporting the growth of creative industries. There is increasing acknowledgement, both from international bodies such as the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and from national governments, that the creative industries comprise an economic sector with potential for significant growth. Particularly in developing countries, there has been an upturn in the creative economy in recent years, and it may be a sector which offers a valuable and dynamic alternative to industry, agriculture, tourism and services. For countries facing problems of small size and expensive distribution costs, including the numerous small states of the Commonwealth, the creative industries offer an exciting alternative.

Nevertheless, the growth and success of the creative industries is linked to issues of trade. Without the ability to sell products within a fair trading system, creative industries will struggle to succeed in developing countries. The Convention speaks specifically to this issue, and outlines the need to exempt cultural goods, products and services from the same trade liberalisation rules that can apply to other sectors. Trade, within a fair system, arguably offers one of the most immediate ways in which developing countries can strengthen their creative industries, support cultural expression, and in doing so protect and promote the global diversity of cultural expression.

The recent Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) signed between EU and Cariforum countries in October 2008 is a highly significant development in this area. The Protocol on Cultural Cooperation attached to the EPA grants greater access for artists and cultural goods from the Caribbean to the EU. It also encourages co-production in the audiovisual sector through joint Caribbean-European initiatives which would have access to European markets as European products under the quota system. The Protocol explicitly acknowledges, for the first time, the Convention as the justification for these agreements. While there remain doubts over how the EPA will be implemented in the Caribbean, there is nevertheless widespread hope that this is an indication of the concrete benefits which the Convention can help to bring.

With this in mind, the Convention could also be integrated more widely in future trade agreements. The EU, as a grouping of countries which has been a leading architect of the Convention, could take a lead here in future regional agreements, particularly with

ACP states. However, individual countries such as the UK and other Commonwealth member states could also incorporate the Convention and its spirit into bilateral trade agreements, offering preferential treatment in the cultural sector to developing countries in order to use the Convention as an option for international development.

4 Gathering and sharing of information

There remains a need to gather better information and carry out further mapping of the creative industries if the case is to be made successfully that growing creative industries in the light of the Convention can generate economic growth, support livelihoods and offer a development option. In developing a further evidence base, there is also a need to move beyond simple assertions that creative industries are good for economic growth, and instead develop a more nuanced understanding of the differences that exist in different situations, and the lessons that can be learned from these differences. Further, this information must be shared and made easily accessible. Recent initiatives undertaken by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) in this direction are promising.

In demonstrating the importance of the diversity of cultural expressions for development, there is also an urgent need to identify new and better indicators of human development which take into account the significance of cultural expression. For example, methodologies adopted by cultural studies might offer one route into better capturing the significance of cultural expression for human development, but in a donor environment often driven by short-term results, there may be a need to develop and use alternative indicators of what impact and success might look like, and how they might be quantified.

5 Local government

The Convention, asserting the right of sovereign states to protect and promote their own cultures and creative industries, arguably uses the nation state as the primary unit of analysis. However, if the Convention is to be successfully implemented, there is also a need to acknowledge local and regional government and policymaking as a further central unit of analysis and to value diversity within national borders. For example, within London significant potential funding and resourcing of creative industries comes through local government. Despite often not having an explicit mandate for culture, local government channels significant public funds into cultural endeavour and events and there is real scope to implement the spirit of the Convention, but little connection made at present. At the European level, there are over two hundred regional government bodies which could contribute to the successful implementation of the Convention.

Local and regional government, moreover, can have knowledge and expertise of the community's needs in a way that national governments may not. There may be a need to acknowledge more widely the role of local government, and to ensure that the Convention is integrated into local and regional government policies, both in the UK and in Commonwealth countries. The importance of protecting and promoting the diversity of cultural expressions outlined by the Convention is particularly important with respect to strengthening community cohesion and fostering an atmosphere of respect and understanding, and it is therefore imperative that sub-national government continues to engage with the Convention. The Convention should not be interpreted as something

that allows national-level majority cultures to dominate or be imposed. Support for minorities will be a valuable safeguard in this regard.

6 Diaspora communities: making transnational connections

Similarly, the growth in diaspora communities presents new challenges to think in new ways that are at the same time both local and transnational. It is clear that an international and transnational approach is important also for local and regional governments. The Convention can help diaspora communities and local government to see themselves as part of a bigger, global picture. Nevertheless, there are often difficulties in forging and supporting connections between communities in different countries.

Local and national governments should acknowledge the significance of diaspora communities in protecting and promoting the diversity of cultural expressions, and promote arenas in which these efforts could be supported. For example, the Commonwealth might be one arena in which transnational connections could be supported with innovation and dynamism.

7 Sustaining momentum in raising awareness and ratification of the Convention

There is a need to ensure the global effectiveness of the Convention by encouraging governments that have not ratified the Convention to consider doing so. The speed of the global ratification process has been a particularly rapid one, but there will nevertheless be a need for others to ratify if the Convention is to maximise its significance. It is important to note that the Convention was brought into existence in large part because of civil society efforts and fruitful relationships with government. The Commonwealth Foundation, as an intergovernmental organisation at the juncture between government and civil society, could continue to play a role in facilitating these relationships in member countries.

Efforts to raise awareness about the Convention and the issues it raises should be continued and where possible stepped up. There is a window of opportunity in which the importance and potential of the Convention must be asserted if it is to have lasting significance. With this in mind, there is a need to find innovative ways of reaching new audiences and communicating messages about the importance of the diversity of cultural expressions. Linking with other, often more prominent, global debates on globalisation, fair trade and cultural diversity could help in this regard.

8 Civil society

The Convention explicitly outlines an important role for civil society, particularly in its implementation. For a UNESCO Convention, this is unusual, and the role for civil society was exemplified at the previous Intergovernmental Committee Meeting in Paris in June, where for the first time at UNESCO civil society organisations were formally consulted.

Nevertheless, with the exception of the work of the International Federation of Coalitions for Cultural Diversity (IFCCD) and some other prominent players, there is still little understanding amongst civil society organisations of the Convention, nor of how to make the most of the opportunity it presents for civil society. The onus to facilitate structures to

enable greater dialogue with civil society lies with the state signatories of the Convention, but civil society needs to undertake efforts to make this a reality. The language of the Convention and associated instruments can often be confusing and this complexity can often lead to the exclusion of cultural practitioners and organisations which could be benefiting from the Convention and its implications. Similarly, there is a danger that those civil society organisations engaging with the Convention and its implementation might have exclusive access to the benefits. A significant gap of understanding can exist between those elite civil society organisations comfortable with the language and discourse adopted by governments and intergovernmental bodies, and those people, practitioners and organisations at the grassroots who should stand to benefit from the Convention. With this in mind, it is important that efforts should continue to be made to communicate to all civil society organisations the opportunities, challenges and complexities of the Convention, and how they can benefit from it. Just as importantly, governments need to support structures to encourage the role of civil society in realising the objectives of the Convention.

Capacity weaknesses continue to exist for civil society organisations, which tend to have limited financial and human resources. Support should therefore continue to be given where possible to help civil society organise around these issues, and to implement the Convention. The Convention correctly identifies civil society as possessed of experience and expertise which contributes to their unique potential as implementers of the Convention at all levels; local, national, regional and international. The Commonwealth Foundation is one organisation that could and should continue to provide support in this regard.

Recommendations of the UK Coalition for Cultural Diversity



UK Coalition for Cultural Diversity

CONTEXTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

From the seminar

International Development and the Diversity of Cultural Expressions
Commonwealth Foundation
Marlborough House, London
6 November 2008

This seminar was convened to inform and identify key agencies to play an active role in the implementation of the UNESCO Convention on the Protection and the Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, 2005, and in particular with regard to the needs of the developing world.

It took place in the following context:

- the UK ratification of the Convention which became law in March this year
- the UK's commitment to achieving the Millennium Development Goals which seek an end to extreme poverty by 2015
- the endorsement of the Convention in the Kampala Declaration of the Commonwealth People's Forum at the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting in Uganda, November 2007
- the European Union's support for the Convention and the Protocol on Cultural Cooperation included in the recent Economic Partnership Agreements with Caribbean countries
- the key role played by civil society and in particular by the International Federation of Coalitions for Cultural Diversity, a resource of over 600 cultural organisations worldwide across the spectrum of creative arts, museums and heritage in supporting the Convention
- the severe challenges faced by the global economy and its failure to deliver to the needs of the developing world
- the 2002 International Development Act and The Commission for Africa's statement underlining the importance of culture in development
- the new Presidency in the United States, thus far a key opponent of the Convention
- the publication of the DCMS Report 'Creative Britain' with its 26 initiatives which recognise the contribution of the creative industries to the UK economy
- the publication of UNCTAD's Report 'Creative Economy Report 2008', containing global statistics which reveal the gap in access and exchange between developed and developing worlds.

RECOMMENDATIONS

General

1. The Convention has now been ratified by 93 nation states and became law in this country in March this year. The UK National Commission for UNESCO, the Commonwealth, the European Union, the UK Government and civil society agencies should

- work together to inform both public and government agencies of the articles of the Convention
- maximise signatories so that it achieves the impact and weight of other international treaties such as the *Kyoto Protocol*¹ on climate change
- encourage the United States' new Presidency to review its opposition to the Convention, and embrace its objectives of diversity of expressions and social justice.

2. The Convention addresses the need for policy development at national level, and its implementation requires collaboration at local, national, regional and international government level. The UK Government and other agencies should promote

- connectivity between policy at local, national and regional level wherever and whenever possible
- collaboration between the UK and other individual nation states and between the UK and other regional blocks
- projects facilitating mutually supportive south-south cooperation as well as north-south exchange.

UK Government

3. The Convention includes the setting up of an International Cultural Fund for the successful implementation of the Convention and many of the initiatives below. The UK government should contribute in a significant manner and on a recurring basis to the Fund, and work within the European Union to ensure other European countries do the same.

4. Article 11 of the Convention provides for the meaningful participation of civil society, given the gap which is experienced between, on the one hand, civil society and creative artists working in the cultural sector and, on the other, those with responsibility for developing policy. The UK government should work with the UK National Commission for UNESCO to facilitate structures to enable maximum consultation with and input from creator and civil society organisations.

5. Articles 14 to 17 provide for projects of collaboration and exchange with the developing world, and allow for preferential treatment to be given to these countries. The 2002 International Development Act and The Commission for Africa's statement also underline the importance of culture in development and can underpin a review of policy in the light of the Convention's objectives. Moreover, the UK has strong cultural institutions through which it has developed excellence in policy to support the creative

¹The Kyoto Protocol is a [protocol](#) to the [United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change](#) (UNFCCC or FCCC)

arts and safeguard diversity of expressions and is therefore in a position to play an active, exemplary role. In light of these factors, the UK Government should

- Mainstream the objectives of the Convention into current policy and projects for the Department for International Development
- Actively explore ways to implement Article 16, which outlines in the Convention the principle of preferential treatment for developing countries to facilitate greater exchange of cultural goods and services, including the movement of artists themselves by streamlining cumbersome visa restrictions
- Disseminate information on the Convention to all relevant departments and ensure connectivity between relevant government departments on policy which effects the development of diversity of cultural expressions. Departments with a key role to play to include the Department for International Development (DFID); the Department for Culture Media and Sport (DCMS); the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS); the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF); the Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (BERR); and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO)
- Consider examples of best practice such as public service broadcasting, media literacy and other measures encouraging cultural diversity of expressions and facilitate structures to maximise exchange with the developing world, for instance in the audiovisual sector through the implementation of the Audiovisual Media Services Directive and the encouragement of a greater diversity of content from the developing world across channels broadcasting in the UK, both on and off line.

6. New digital technologies offer huge creative and cultural opportunities. Given the evidence of significant disparity of access both to the internet and to digital equipment in the developing countries, the UK Government should

- play a leading role in seeking investment and preferential treatment for the development of resources to universalise access on-line
- motivate schemes with the private sector to enable the sale at reduced prices of new, digital equipment to developing countries
- facilitate the recycling of used digital equipment to developing countries.

Civil society

7. Civil society, creator organisations and universities in the UK can provide the expertise for exchange of skills, and the UK Government should work together with these organisations to assist programmes identified and informed by local agencies, and/or government, in developing countries by

- supporting the development and implementation of cultural policy
- carrying out mapping exercises of the creative industries
- systematising existing data and gathering of further data reflecting the value of the creative industries to national governments
- setting up knowledge transfer schemes for professional development, and curricular and e-learning programmes to support learning in policy for the creative industries and exchange of entrepreneurial skills

- developing models based on best practice in the UK – e.g. public broadcasting, digitisation of national libraries – for application in other countries where relevant and on a sustainable, local basis.

The UK National Commission for UNESCO

8. The UK National Commission for UNESCO represents UNESCO policy in this country and has identified the Convention as a priority for action this year. Therefore, it should

- seek to increase knowledge of the Convention nationally and promote events to achieve greater public awareness of the Convention
- play an active role in brokering between government departments
- play an active role in brokering between government and civil society organisations
- seek funds for projects to achieve the implementation of the Convention.

The Convention's Intergovernmental Committee

9. Article 11 of the Convention specifically calls for the involvement of civil society. Given the expertise of civil society organisations in the creative industries, the administration of the International Cultural Fund, as well as any committees set up to disseminate funds, should include representation from civil society.

10. To guard against the danger of national governments potentially using the Convention to further the interests of a dominant culture, artists' and creators' organisations should be able to submit project applications and receive funding directly without having to go through government agencies.

The Commonwealth

11. Only one third of the Commonwealth community, as opposed to two thirds of the Francophone community, have ratified the Convention. The Commonwealth should therefore

- urge all its members to ratify the Convention
- ensure that signatories contribute to the International Cultural Fund according to their means and resources.

12. The Commonwealth represents a network of 53 members from both small and large states and is in a strategic position to facilitate projects in support of the Convention. The Commonwealth should therefore

- increase resources to the Commonwealth Foundation to strengthen its Culture Programme
- help identify and support mutually beneficial projects between member countries to exchange skills and cultural works.

The European Union

13. In EU international policy the objectives of the Convention have been taken into account, for example in the cultural protocols attached to the Economic Partnership Agreements with the Caribbean and the launch of Media International to encourage projects with the developing world. The European Union should

- incorporate the objectives of the Convention into the competence of EU law internally, particularly with respect of the single market and competition law as existing provisions are not adequate to safeguard the protection and promotion of diversity of cultural expressions
- underpin the cultural protocols with funding
- increase its budget allocation for encouraging diversity of expression and intercultural dialogue both within the Union and between the Union and its partners in developing countries.

Local authorities

14. Local government has a close interface with civil society. Given the connection between diasporas in developed urban communities and the developing world, local authorities should use political will and imagination to

- find ways of integrating the objectives of the Convention at local level
- facilitate structures to consult relevant civil society, cultural and creative organisations about ways to achieve the implementation of the Convention
- maximise opportunities to build on the links and the expertise of diaspora communities
- establish systems and data gathering to monitor best practice in delivering the Convention's objectives.

15. The Greater London Authority is undertaking a review of cultural policy under its new leadership, and this should reflect and implement, where relevant, the provisions of the Convention.

UK Coalition for Cultural Diversity, 26 November 2008

Annex 2: List of participants

Mariam Agbaje

London Mayor's Commission on
Asian and African Heritage

Clara Arokiasamy

London Mayor's Heritage and Diversity
Task Force

Laura Atar

Canada High Commission

Curtis Bart

Antigua High Commission

Ivor Benjamin

Chair, Directors Guild of Great Britain

Joe Boyd

Record producer/writer

Mandy Budge

Teachers Beyond Borders

Makeda Coaston

London Mayor's Office

Alison Cox

Commonwealth Resounds

Joanne Crouch

UK Coalition for Cultural Diversity

Steve Cushion

Centre for Caribbean Studies, London
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Grant Essilfie

Ghana High Commission

Andrew Firmin

Programme Manager – Culture,
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Terri Anderson

Jennette Arnold

Chair, London Assembly

Holly Aylett

Director, UK Coalition for Cultural
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Hannah Bellini Sarno

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Professor Sir Alec Boksenberg

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Director, Commonwealth Foundation

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Crome Pictures

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Commonwealth Youth Exchange
Council

Emma D'Costa

Commonwealth Foundation

Linda Etchart

Birkbeck University

Vynnette Frederick

Secretary Treasurer, Caribbean
Copyright Link of Saint Vincent and
the Grenadines

Abigail Freeman
Vertigo Magazine

Teresa Hall
British Council

Rowena Harding
Communications Adviser,
Commonwealth Foundation

Hazman Hashim

Colin Hicks
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Government Office in London

Peter Jenner
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Michelle Loh
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Nola Marshall
DNA Culture

Phil Maxwell
Photojournalist

Donna Murphy
Music for Change

Sara Nesbitt
King's College London

Rosanna Raymond

Carolyn de Freitas-Sawh
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
High Commission

Selina Hannaford
Commonwealth Scholarship
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Cultural writer

Mpho Ncube
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Nikisha Smith
Commonwealth Secretariat

Jennifer Sobol
Programme Officer - Culture,
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Chitra Sundaram
Performance artist

Hedwig Tjituka
Namibia High Commission

Michael Walling
Artistic Director, Border Crossings

Professor Sam Whimster
Deputy Director, Global Policy Institute,
London Metropolitan University

Akiko Yanagisawa
Mu: Arts

Jean Stubbs
Director, Caribbean Studies Centre,
London Metropolitan University

Valerie Synmoie
Arts Council England

Carole Tongue
Chair, UK Coalition for Cultural
Diversity

Ian White
UK National Commission for
UNESCO

Peter Williams OBE
Secretary, Commonwealth
Consortium for Education

**Professor The Baroness Lola
Young of Hornsey OBE**
Cultural Brokers

Annex 3: Agenda

International Development and the Diversity of Cultural Expressions

How can UK and Commonwealth approaches to development benefit from UNESCO's groundbreaking new Convention on the Protection and Promotion of Diversity of Cultural Expressions (2005)?

Thursday 6 November 2008
Commonwealth Foundation
Marlborough House
London

- 2.00 pm *Welcome*
Dr Mark Collins
Director, Commonwealth Foundation
- 2.15 pm *Introduction: promoting the objectives of the Convention as an instrument for development*
Holly Aylett
Director, UK Coalition for Cultural Diversity
- 2.30 pm Panel
- A perspective from the UK National Commission for UNESCO*
Professor Sir Alec Boksenberg
Chair, UK National Commission for UNESCO
- The Convention in European Union policy: facilitating creative exchange with developing countries*
Ruth Hieronymi
Member of European Parliament, Germany
- Local government and diasporas: promoting diversity of cultural expression and supporting the creative industries*
Jennette Arnold
Chair, London Assembly
- Meeting the challenge to protect and promote our Caribbean culture*
Vynnette Frederick
Caribbean Copyright Link, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
- 3.45 pm Tea break
- 4.30 pm Roundtables: Putting the UNESCO Convention to work
- 5.30 pm Plenary session reconvenes and reports back on recommendations
- 5.35 pm Concluding remarks
- Carole Tongue
Chair, UK Coalition for Cultural Diversity