



**REPORT TO THE  
ANNUAL MINISTERIAL MEETING OF THE  
INTERNATIONAL NETWORK ON CULTURAL POLICY**

**Rio de Janeiro, Brazil  
23 November 2006**

**Introduction**

The International Network for Cultural Diversity is a worldwide network of non-governmental organizations and individuals in the cultural sector working in every arts and culture discipline to counter the adverse effects of economic globalization. In the past year, INCD continued to grow (we now have members in 76<sup>1</sup> countries in every corner of the globe) and we achieved significant progress:

- From our office in Dakar, INCD launched a major new initiative in sub-Saharan Africa to support cultural development, to work for ratification of the Convention and to advocate for the inclusion of culture into PRSPs. INCD made significant interventions in meetings of the African Union Culture Ministers, the summit of African Union Heads of State and the first African Cultural Congress.
- INCD established an office in Brussels to build our membership and to work with member states and the European institutions.
- INCD staff, Steering Committee members and activists built support for the principles and objectives of the UNESCO Convention, contributed to the ratification process, and worked to make it effective.
- In numerous conferences and gatherings on every continent and in its regular communication tools, INCD continued to play a leading role in raising awareness of current problems and challenges to cultural diversity, foremost among which are the trade and investment agreements.
- INCD continued to collaborate productively with the INCP, a collaboration that began in 2000 in Santorini, Greece and has extended across continents and the years since then. INCD maintains official relations with UNESCO, WTO, and other intergovernmental agencies.

**Developing Cultural Capacity and Creative Industries in Africa**

When we met with ministers last year in Dakar we joined in celebrating the adoption of the *UNESCO Convention on the protection and promotion of the diversity of cultural expressions*. We called on governments and civil society not only to work for the ratification and successful implementation of the Convention, but also to work to find concrete ways to make it effective as an advocacy tool for the arts and culture community, and as a tool for cultural development.

We are especially pleased to report to you that INCD is doing precisely that in Africa, in a dynamic new partnership with the Danish Center for Culture and Development. Four new networks have been launched: to strengthen income opportunities for local musicians, based in Ghana; to support film as a means of artistic expression and communication on social issues, based in South Africa; to support cultural journalism as a catalyst for a plural and democratic society, based in Mozambique; and to build an advocacy network, based in the INCD office in Senegal.

INCD activities will be focused on two objectives: seeking the ratification of the UNESCO Convention by all countries on the continent and advocating that countries include a cultural dimension into their Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers, as a way of committing to develop their own artists and cultural producers, and as a means of securing funds and other practical support from countries of the North. A major focus of the INCD work will be a conference on African cultural industries being convened in Senegal in March 2007.

### **Other INCD Activities in 2006**

We reported last year that INCD's work plan included other objectives and let us review briefly how we have done on these.

*Objective: work for the ratification of the Convention by 70-85 UNESCO member states*  
INCD has been very active in supporting the Convention around the world. At meetings of the African Union; the Asia, Caribbean and Pacific countries; the European Union; the Organization of American States; various UN agencies; and in meetings and events in China, Korea, India, the Philippines, Indonesia, Bangladesh, Malaysia, Benin, Congo, Mozambique, South Africa, Kenya, Cameroon, Senegal, Uganda, Ghana, Nigeria, Namibia, Sudan, Jordan, Lebanon, Brazil, Mexico, Costa Rica, Jamaica, Venezuela and Cuba; in virtually every country in Europe; and elsewhere, INCD and its members have put the case for the Convention.

Twenty countries have now deposited with UNESCO their instruments of ratification or accession and a number of others have completed their domestic processes. Considering that a number of European states have already ratified the Convention, the minimum threshold of 30 ratifications should be achieved shortly, permitting the Convention to come into force at next year's UNESCO General Conference meeting.

For INCD, the Convention has two basic purposes; it must become a shield to preserve cultural sovereignty, and a tool to promote cultural policies and cultural development. INCD will continue to work to achieve a sufficient number of ratifications to ensure that a strong group of countries can work together to transform the Convention into an effective shield against the trade and investment agreements.

*Objective: Work to resist demands in the WTO and regional and bilateral trade and investment agreements to make commitments that undermine the objectives and principles of the Convention.*

INCD was the only international cultural body active on this front during the year. In December 2005, INCD delegates were at the WTO Ministerial Meeting in Hong Kong, raising awareness of the cultural dimensions of the trade agenda. We organized the largest civil society meeting that took place that week, in partnership with the

Concerned Artists of the Philippines and the Hong Kong Institute of Contemporary Culture. As WTO talks progressed into 2006, INCD published several newsletter reports on the dangers of the new GATS “plurilateral” negotiating protocol, particularly for requests put forward in audiovisual and telecommunications services.

As WTO Doha Round talks stalled and then were suspended, INCD efforts have been shifting to the bilateral and regional levels. Since 2001, the United States has concluded seven new trade agreements involving 11 countries, all of which constrain the ability of the partner country to promote their own artists and cultural producers. In this context, INCD members signed an appeal to the President of the Republic of Peru to resist the pressure from the United States to conclude a U.S./Andean free trade agreement without a comprehensive cultural exception.

In March 2006, INCD led a significant initiative in the United States, in partnership with our principal U.S. collaborator, Reform Media, a non-partisan movement with more than 225,000 members working to increase informed media debate, and the Korean Coalition for Diversity in Moving Images. The United States and the Republic of Korea announced in January the launch of negotiations for a free trade agreement. This followed closely after a decision of the Korean government to slash the screen quota system responsible for the flourishing of the Korean film industry. Our joint submission called on the U.S. government to propose an unrestricted and unlimited exemption for cultural goods and services from the agreement. We also called on the U.S. government to reverse its opposition to the UNESCO Convention.

We expect to continue our analytical, research and advocacy activities on these issues in coming months, and are ready to respond to new initiatives that may emerge from the consultations taking place in recent days at WTO headquarters in Geneva.

### **INCD Work Plan for 2007**

The central focus of our work will continue to be:

- Building support for the ratification and effective implementation of the UNESCO Convention. In this connection, INCD is concerned that Belarus, one of the countries which has ratified the Convention, is regularly cited for violating human rights, including those of artists.
- Raising awareness of the challenges to cultural policies from the trade and investment agreements, and other aspects of economic globalization.
- Working to encourage more balanced exchanges between cultures, including the development of cultural capacity and creative industries in the South.

In addition, as our resources permit, we will move into other areas of work, including:

- raising awareness of the effects of media concentration on cultural diversity;
- working to preserve threatened languages and cultures, including those of indigenous peoples;
- exploring the cultural dimension of the human security agenda;
- implementing a Fair Trade Music campaign, analogous to fair trade programs for other products; and
- working to make international legal cultural rights more robust
- collaborating with the 3<sup>rd</sup> World Festival of Black Arts, since the rich cultures of Africa and its Diaspora arise from the cradle of humanity.

We will also continue to collaborate with the INCP, since we believe it is essential for the world's culture ministers to work together. We urge the INCP to develop a long term vision and strategy which acknowledges that the UNESCO Convention is only one small part of promoting cultural diversity. Ministers this year are discussing intellectual property rights, and INCD has developed an agenda dealing with cultural development, thus we both acknowledge that the boundaries of our work must expand.

INCD acknowledges and is grateful for the funding support we have received from the Government of Canada for many years. It was thus with deep regret that we received the news that Canada has decided to withdraw all funds from INCD, retroactive to last April. This decision has significant consequences since Canada was the primary source of funding for INCD's Canadian-based international secretariat for the past two years. Thus, we were unable to organize a civil society meeting here in Rio de Janeiro that was comparable to those we have organized in collaboration with INCP since 2000. INCD is developing its work plan for 2007 and it will engage on the full range of issues that intersect with cultural diversity, including the Convention. As we launch our search for other funding, we will be looking to those of you who share our broader vision of cultural diversity.

### **Acknowledgements**

We wish to thank those who have made it possible for us to meet here this week, the government of Brazil, l'Organisation internationale de la francophonie, the Swedish International Development Agency, Canada's Creators Rights Alliance, the United Nations Development Programme, and our Brazilian partners, the Instituto Diversidade Cultural and the Fórum Cultural Mundial2006.

We acknowledge and deeply appreciate the support we receive from the Swedish International Development Agency which has been our largest funder for the past three years, supporting our African activities. We thank the Danish Center for Culture and Development which has been the catalyst for our new African activities, along with the HIVOS Foundation from the Netherlands and the Stromme Foundation from Norway. We also thank the Flemish Community of Belgium for supporting the European Branch of INCD and hope the government of Greece will soon confirm a grant for similar purposes.

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<sup>1</sup> INCD has members in the following countries: Argentina, Austria, Australia, Bangladesh, Benin, Belgium, Bolivia, Bermuda, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burundi, Cameroon, Canada, China, Cote d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Denmark, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Hong Kong, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Korea, India, Indonesia, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Mauritius, México, Mongolia, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, République du Congo, République Centrafricaine, Romania, Russia, Sénégal, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Sweden, South Africa, Taiwan, Tanzania, Thailand, Uganda, Ukraine, USA, Vanuatu, Venezuela, Macedonia, UK, Tanzania, Thailand, Trinidad, Sweden, Switzerland, Zambia, Zimbabwe INCD also has a number of international organizations which are members and these organizations have members in other countries.