



## International Network for Cultural Diversity

*A Voice for Culture and the Arts  
in the Era of Globalization*

**International Network for Cultural Diversity**  
**September 2006**  
**Vol. 7 No 4**

### **Contents:**

- 1. INCD New and Events**
- 2. UNESCO Convention Ratification**
- 3. WTO Negotiators Shift to a Longer Timeframe**
- 4. Creativity in the Diversity Business: Reflections on the INCD**
- 5. Events and Announcements**

### **1. INCD News and Events**

#### **International Secretariat News**

Regretfully, we must announce that Albanela Pérez-Suárez is no longer INCD Coordinator. Her departure results from the uncertain financial situation of the Canadian secretariat, caused by the lengthy delay in receiving confirmation of funding from the Department of Canadian Heritage for the fiscal year that began 1 April 2006. In this newsletter, Albanela has written some reflections on her time at INCD. We know that all members wish her well in her future endeavours.

For the time being, all correspondence to INCD will be handled by the Executive Director who continues in his position.

Also as a result of this uncertainty, the Steering Committee has temporarily suspended the election process launched two months ago. The election of a new Steering Committee will be organized at the earliest possible date after the funding situation of the Canadian secretariat has stabilized.

#### **INCD Meeting, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 23-25 November**

In a related development, INCD has been advised the Government of Brazil can offer no support to the INCD meeting proposed to be held in November in collaboration with the annual meeting of culture ministers organized in the International Network on Cultural Policy. In all previous years, INCD has received considerable support from the host government (Greece, Switzerland, South Africa, Croatia, China and Senegal), each of which provided meeting rooms, simultaneous interpretation and funding or other services to enable the INCD to convene a civil society gathering to coincide with the ministerial event. This year, the host government can offer no support.

While INCD will meet in Brazil, the nature and dates of the meeting will change in

response to this development. The INCD Steering Committee will meet 23, 24 and 25 November. This coincides more closely with the World Culture Forum which kicks off in Rio with a gala opening on 24 November and runs to early December (information at [www.forumculturalmundial.org](http://www.forumculturalmundial.org)). The secretariat wishes to hear from all INCD members who will be in Rio de Janeiro to participate in WCF events. All members in Rio are invited to join with the Steering Committee beginning the afternoon of 24<sup>th</sup> November to discuss the future of INCD.

### **Conference on Creative Industries in Africa**

Plans for the conference on creative industries in Africa were discussed in Den Hague on 14 September between representatives of INCD, the Danish Center for Culture and Development, HIVOS (Netherlands) and Strommestiftelsen (Norway).

With the growing interest in the Conference and concrete funding commitments from new partners, it was decided to reconsider the location and dates for the gathering in order to ensure the broadest attendance. For INCD and DCCD, the objectives of the conference are to:

- Strengthen the recognition of, and support for, creative industries as a vector for development in Africa and a means to achieve poverty reduction, social development, democratization and promotion of human rights, and
- Support networking and sharing of best practices from creative industries, demonstrate the social and economic impact of creative industries and advocate for an enabling policy environment for creative industries in Africa

Keep watching the newsletter for updates on African activities. For further information please contact the secretariat or Ibrahima Seck, INCD West and Central African Coordinator, [iseck@yahoo.fr](mailto:iseck@yahoo.fr).

## **2. UNESCO Convention Ratification**

Progress toward ratifying the *Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions* has finally started to accelerate. According to UNESCO, 12 states have deposited their instruments of ratification or acceded to the Convention by 22 September 2006. These are Canada, Mauritius, Mexico, Romania, Monaco, Bolivia, Djibouti, Croatia, Togo, Belarus, Madagascar and Burkina Faso. According to INCD members and other sources, a number of other countries have either completed, or are close to completing, their domestic approval processes.

Three months after the thirtieth such instrument is deposited, the Convention will come into effect.

The situation in Europe is complicated. Finland, Sweden, Denmark, Austria and France have completed the necessary domestic steps to accede to the Convention and several other states are well along in their internal process. In May, Europe's Council of Ministers ratified the Convention and decided that "in principle" ratification by all

members should be “simultaneous.” Discussions are currently underway about whether the council of ministers in the culture field, who will be meeting in November, could authorize “non-simultaneous” ratification, since some member states may take considerable time to complete their domestic process.

INCD continues to urge all governments to move quickly to ratify the Convention and to urge UNESCO to step up its efforts to encourage ratification. If you have authoritative information about the ratification process in your country or would like more information about the INCD ratification campaign, please contact the INCD secretariat.

### **3. WTO Negotiators Shift to a Longer Timeframe**

In late July, Pascal Lamy, Director-General of the World Trade Organization (WTO) announced that the Doha Round of negotiations have been suspended indefinitely. Despite recent discussions to get the negotiations back on track and a meeting of the Cairns Group of countries (some of those with an interest in agricultural issues), the negotiations remain “adrift,” in the words of Lamy.

As reported in previous newsletters, there are concerns about possible serious consequences of a new GATS agreement for the treatment of cultural services, including the audio-visual sector. However, the GATS negotiations are suspended for the moment along with the rest.

Under the “plurilateral request” negotiating protocol, a process that WTO implemented this year to put more pressure on member states to “improve” their services offers, many countries received a request from seven countries, including the United States and Japan to open up motion picture production, distribution and exhibition; promotion and advertising; and sound recording services. The request seeks the elimination of content quotas, foreign equity restrictions, nationality or residency requirements, discriminatory tax treatment, local production or employment requirements, and other policy measures. It also seeks to limit the use of co-production treaties. In other words, foreign firms would be free to set up in any market and to operate without restrictions and government measures designed to promote cultural diversity.

The other key challenge for culture in GATS is the discussions on “domestic regulations.” Any agreement in this field may well put pressure on cultural policies, since these are likely to fall under the definition of domestic regulations and could run afoul of new rules which limit the ability of regulations to affect the cross border movement of services.

The suspension followed the collapse of a last ditch negotiating session in Geneva at the end of July which failed to reach agreement on the issues of agricultural subsidies and market access.

It is now clear that a comprehensive trade deal will not be reached before the mid-2007 expiry of the “fast-track” negotiating authority provided to the U.S. President, which is

essential for any deal to be approved by Congress. Thus, WTO negotiators have begun to focus on a timetable that would conclude talks after the 2008 U.S. presidential election, when the new president will be able to obtain fresh “fast-track” authority. Some expect that certain countries will push for the GATS negotiations to be resumed separately from the Doha Round, since they were part of the left-over matters from the previous negotiating round and were mandated to continue at that time. However, as agriculture was also part of the so-called “built-in” agenda, this may not make it easier to obtain an agreement on the contentious issues.

Keep watching this newsletter for updates.

#### **4. Creativity in the Diversity Business: Reflections on the INCD**

**Albanela PérezSuárez**  
**INCD Coordinator 2005-2006**

*Creativity is not the monopoly of the artist: it is much wider than and can be found in education, science and elsewhere. Creativity is in and around us all.*

David Parrish

As Carlos Fuentes observed, *we possess the tradition, imagination, intellectual and organizational reserves to elaborate our models of development, consonant with the truth of what we have been, what we are, and what we want to be.* Creativity is at the heart of arts and culture. Culture is a nurtured core process of human groups which enhances creativity in every field of innovative production. Understanding one’s potential creativity broadens the idea of human progress and contributes to future generations.

Moreover, integrating culture, modern technological knowledge and political systems implies assimilating resources, through a complex process, in a unique model of development. Anne Bamford, in her global search compendium, *The Wow Factor*, argued that arts, more than ever, are shaping and influencing our daily lives through the media and the creative industries. Studying cases from more than 60 countries, she analyzes the differences between education *in* the arts and education *through* the arts; and concludes that arts are adding value to national economies and improving the quality of education.

The international community has been searching for more than a decade for a model of development that can preserve diversity and achieve sustainability. We might learn from the many indigenous communities which are combining traditional healing techniques with other curative methods. We should explore common, adaptable, alternative and particular forms of development that will generate quantifiable results.

In order to realize this, it has been recognized in international development strategies such as the Millennium Development Goals (designed as a global pact to reduce by 2015 poverty, hunger, disease, illiteracy and environmental degradation, among other things) that it will be necessary to forge a harmonious relationship between human beings and

their environment and heritage, and take into account the interests of present and future generations. Unfortunately, this understanding remains internationally more at the discussion level than at the level of practical implementation.

Many non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have tried to highlight these issues, to include them in events and to reproduce success stories. While UNESCO recalls that cultural diversity is as necessary for humankind as biodiversity is for nature, NGOs work to increase understanding and to embed the implications of cultural diversity into development and improving quality of life.

But the result of the work of NGOs is often modest and uneven. While they can have strong principles attached to the essence of humanity, NGOs are not businesses and are often poorly sustained. Furthermore, in the context of arts and culture, creation is an act of individual human beings, each artistic work is unique and often produced for non-commercial purposes. Working for a fairer world, cultural NGOs are not working only for a small part of the human society, but from the understanding that arts and culture are part of the global development agenda, not as a luxury, but as a necessity. They are a step ahead, which is essential in a world of such diversity and so many basic needs.

In order to overcome their financial instability, it is time for NGOs to operate as creative businesses, joining together their ethical spirit with contemporary management and leadership techniques.

While it may seem contradictory to be part of the creative sector and advocating for cultural rights, and at the same time to be adopting a traditional business model, it is time for NGOs like the International Network for Cultural Diversity to consider such a strategy in a new action plan. If it is to survive and grow, INCD will have to capture the opportunities, re-position itself shrewdly among others organizations and create its own formula.

Until cultural NGOs can establish themselves more firmly, they will never make it to the real agenda. The World Bank and IMF meeting in September in Singapore explored social issues such as governance, social accountability, women and trade, sustainable energy, debt reduction and CSO accountability; but arts and culture was only for entertaining the delegates. There was no discussion about the important role of cultural development and about the need to integrate cultural impact assessment into the frameworks and processes of economic development activities.

The International Network for Cultural Diversity must start a dialogue about how to reinvigorate itself to carry out its role as a network of networks, and a voice for the arts and culture in the international arenas. INCD must renew its strategic plan, renew its governance structure and develop a new and realistic financial plan.

A comprehensive review of INCD's vision, the current situation, and the needs of its members and other interlocutors is essential. It must understand its allies, competitors and other external forces, and (re)build its relations with governments and international

organizations. INCD has been very effective in its advocacy for the *UNESCO Convention on the protection and promotion of the diversity of cultural expressions* and for the current ratification process. But, INCD must learn to operate in a rapidly changing world.

What threatens the integration of cultural diversity as an essential element of sustainable development? How can INCD be managed as a creative business with a realistic assessment of the market? NGOs must start combining their knowledge with key performance indicators and make their methods more scientific, in the same way that indigenous peoples are combining traditional healing methods with modern technologies.

For INCD, the route to success is to design a realistic plan that encourages improvement and motivates members. Because the last important organizational element is to have key people who are committed to the philosophy and genuinely ready to navigate the journey. Finally, keep in mind that nothing is absolute; each idea, even the idea of diversity, needs to be adapted to the circumstances and ethos. Understanding and integrating differences can achieve more effective solutions.

## **5. Events and Announcements**

*If we have missed your organization's event, please contact the Secretariat at [incd@ccarts.ca](mailto:incd@ccarts.ca) for inclusion in the next newsletter.*

Regions and Cultural Diversity  
September 28-29, 2006  
Lyon, France  
[www.rhonealpes.fr](http://www.rhonealpes.fr)

Islands and Bridges,  
European Forum for the Arts and Heritage,  
October 5-7, 2006  
Helsinki, Finland  
[www.efah.org](http://www.efah.org)

Future of Music – Policy Summit  
October 5-7, 2006  
McGill University,  
Montréal, Canada  
[www.futureofmusic.org](http://www.futureofmusic.org)

Creative Clusters 2006  
NewcastleGateshead  
November 6-8, 2006  
[www.creativeclusters.com](http://www.creativeclusters.com)

International Network for Cultural Diversity  
Steering Committee and friends  
November 23-25, 2006  
Rio de Janeiro – Brazil  
<http://www.incd.net>



**The INCD would like to thank the Government of Canada for on-going financial support. We wish also to thank the Swedish International Development Agency, the Danish Center for Culture and Development and the Flemish community for providing important contributions to our work.**

**INCD/RIDC**  
804-130 Albert St  
Ottawa ON K1P 5G4  
Canada  
Tel 1 613 238 3561 Ext 17  
Fax 1 613 238 4849  
[incd@ccarts.ca](mailto:incd@ccarts.ca)  
[www.incd.net](http://www.incd.net)

*Please post and/or distribute. When reprinting INCD Newsletters, please give appropriate credit.*