

Founding Statement

International Network for Cultural Diversity

Revised with input from delegates at the founding session
December 2000

The International Network for Cultural Diversity comprises artists, creators, cultural workers, producers and those who bring the artistic creation to local and global audiences. We are non-governmental organizations and individual activists working for cultural diversity. We represent the world's arts and cultural communities and its living heritage, our past and our future.

Founding Principles

- Expression through arts and culture is a fundamental part of human society
- Cultural diversity strengthens us all and must be maintained and promoted as an important part of sustainable development
- The fruits of artistic creation are more than conventional goods and services, each is unique and all are an integral part of human societies
- Cultures should have the opportunity to interact with each other, enriching artistic expression and expanding choices
- Market forces alone cannot ensure cultural diversity at the national and international levels
- States and citizens have a right and a responsibility to implement policies and programs that support diverse artistic and cultural activities and to protect these from unwanted interventions from outside political or economic forces
- Recognition and preservation of the cultures of indigenous peoples and traditional cultures requires special attention.

Culture and Trade

Current trade agreements do affect the arts and cultural expression and "exempting" culture from their terms appears to be insufficient to permit states and citizens to retain the broad scope of policy making necessary in the era of globalization. We need to redress the imbalance between concerns for cultural diversity and economic imperatives. We need to promote the full social, human and economic development aspects of a commitment to cultural diversity.

Culture is broad, it touches all aspects of society. But there is a particular challenge at this moment, between culture and commerce, culture and trade. The pivotal role of the recorded media for cultural expression in today's world means the challenge is most acutely felt in this area.

We Believe:

- Governments must not enter into any agreement that constrains local cultures and the policies that support them
- The implementation of a new international agreement will give a permanent legal foundation for cultural diversity.

Membership

The Network is a citizen's movement, open to all non-governmental organizations and individuals that support our Principles and share our objectives. We invite governments, their agencies and intergovernmental institutions to join us as affiliate members.

In order to finance the work of the Network, we will ask our members to contribute financially, according to their ability:

	U.S. \$
Individual members	25
Local Organizations	50
National Organizations	100
International Organizations/National Coalitions	150

Steering Committee

The Network will be governed initially by a Steering Committee, which will seek input as required from the members by means of the Website. The Committee will be comprised of the following members:

- Luciana Castellina, *Valencia Forum, Brussels/Rome*
- Peter Curman, *President, Swedish Joint Committee of Literary and Artistic Professionals, Stockholm*
- James C. Early, *Director, Cultural Heritage Policy, Smithsonian Institution Center for Folklife and Cultural Policy, Washington, D.C.*
- Mireille Gagné, *Director, Canadian Music Centre Quebec, Montreal*
- Aris Marangopoulos, *Society of Greek Writers, Athens*
- Japan Mthembu, *General Secretary, Performing Arts Workers Equity, Johannesburg*
- Yolanda Schweri, *General Secretary, SuisseCulture, Zurich (to be confirmed)*
- Megan Williams, *Director, Canadian Conference of the Arts, Ottawa*

The Steering Committee is empowered to add members in order to achieve an appropriate balance of regions and disciplines. As a priority, the Steering Committee is charged with the responsibility to find appropriate representatives from Latin America and Asia.

The Steering Committee will investigate issues of governance and financing of the Network and report to the members through the Website and at future meetings. In particular, the Steering Committee will develop an appropriate democratic electoral system.

Setting our Agenda

The Network has launched a dialogue that we will extend to others in our communities. The INCD will develop its agenda and an Action Plan to support our objectives. We will work parallel to the culture ministers organized in the International Network for Cultural Policy, intervene in appropriate forums, link with citizens movements in other sectors, and work to ensure our Principles are reflected

in the new cultural agreement. We will encourage governments to recognize the central role of the individual artist and to nurture artistic expression.

To further its work, the INCD will implement a system of national contacts, individual members who can act as a primary liaison in each country.

The function of the national liaison will be to facilitate communication between the INCD and members and other interested groups in that country, and between the INCD and governments.

Monitoring Developments and Advocating our Positions

The primary function of the Network is to monitor developments of interest to the members, ensure that information about them is exchanged and to advocate the agreed positions in the appropriate forums.

The Network will seek appropriate standing with key intergovernmental agencies, including the United Nations, UNESCO, the World Trade Organization, World Intellectual Property Organization, and others.

Next Meetings

The members of the Network will meet again in Lucerne, Switzerland in September 2001 and South Africa in 2002. The Steering Committee will meet as required by teleconference, e-mail and otherwise between these full meetings to carry out the work. The secretariat, which continues for the time being to be housed at the Canadian Conference of the Arts will convene these meetings.