



U40-Programme “Cultural Diversity 2030”

NETWORK IN ACTION

Improving the Visibility of the Convention

Istanbul, October 2010

This paper summarizes the discussions and recommendations of the International Forum of U40-Fellows, held on the occasion of the 5th anniversary of the adoption of the UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions in Istanbul from 21 to 24 October 2010.¹

The “U40 – Cultural Diversity 2030” Network is an international capacity building programme comprised of over 60 young experts from all over the world. Launched by the German Commission for UNESCO in 2007, it intends to create in-depth knowledge on the UNESCO Convention on the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, contribute to the process of the treaty’s ratification and then implementation, and to promote cooperation on international, regional, national and local levels. The Fellows work towards increasing visibility of the Convention promoting ratification suggested practices that foster cultural diversity. The multidisciplinary background of the U40 members, as well as their diverse geographical origins, acts as a wide-angle lens to approach the issue of cultural diversity and to appreciate the value of the UNESCO Convention in today’s globalized world.

Vision 2030

We envision a world in which culture and cultural diversity are actively taken up as a value, an objective, a priority and an instrument for advancing humanity and human development.

To achieve this vision, U40 participants encourage each State Party to formulate and implement cultural policy measures that reflect each State’s particular needs and circumstances. Culture, and specifically the protection and promotion of the diversity of cultural expressions, must be taken into account in every decision-making process and normative initiative adopted at local, national, regional and international levels. In so doing, culture can become a firm global governance priority.

We are all – regions, states, communities and individuals – developing culturally, with equal dignity and mutual respect.

The active involvement and recognized engagement of civil society is essential to achieve this vision.

“Proposals for Cultural Diversity 2030”, U40-World Forum, Paris, 12-14 June 2009

Network in Action (2009-2010)

Following the U40 World Forum in Paris (June 2009) held on the occasion of the 2nd Conference of Parties, and prior to the International Forum of U40-Fellows which convened in Istanbul (October 2010), the U40-network collaborated on international, regional, local and individual initiatives using traditional and cutting-edge communication tools as detailed below.

International Initiatives

U40-Fellows primarily interact online. The U40-mailing list is the main tool used for **knowledge** and **information exchange** among the network members, keeping them active and united. To date, two major tasks have been achieved via e-networking:

- Conceptualization, preparation and production of the publication “Mapping Cultural Diversity – Good Practices from around the Globe”, a joint project of the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF), the German Commission for UNESCO and the U40-network; and
- Creation and adoption of a U40-logo.

¹ Over 40 fellows of the U40-programme representing 23 countries from all world regions participated at the International Forum in Istanbul. The forum’s focus was on the visibility and implementation of the Convention, particularly Articles 9 and 19 as well as on a future U40 strategy ‘Cultural Diversity 2010-2030’.

Local and Regional Initiatives

- Creation of sub-groups to address specific themes related to cultural diversity, in order to aid the process of idea and knowledge exchange and to generate additional agendas for action that follow the U40 vision with an emphasis on the local level;
- U40-meetings in the Americas and Africa were organized to address specific regional issues in relation to the promotion and visibility of the Convention, the role of civil society and the relationship between cultural diversity and sustainable development; and
- Regional U40-groups in Catalonia and Brazil have focused on information-sharing and the promotion of activities to raise awareness about the Convention within their societies.

Individual Actions and Initiatives of Sub-Groups

- U40-Fellows are involved in multiple agendas to raise awareness on the Convention, including organizing and participating in conferences, workshops, seminars and national debates on Culture and Cultural Diversity;
- Fellows have published numerous papers on the Convention, organized capacity-building activities, and realized on-line promotion of the Convention through various websites and blogs; and
- Fellows are engaged in the promotion of the Convention in cooperation with National Coalitions for Cultural Diversity, local authorities and NGO representatives, and have played a key role in the creation of Coalitions for Cultural Diversity in the Caribbean and Peru.

U40-Activities to Increase the Visibility of the Convention and Raise Awareness

- Make the Convention more understandable by providing the right message to the right audiences;
- Link the Convention to the UN MDGs and to international instruments on human rights;
- Develop dialogue spaces for cultural professionals (e.g. festivals, conferences, workshops, meetings) and develop their capacities to advocate for cultural diversity;
- Contribute to the creation of further Coalitions for Cultural Diversity and strengthen the role of those already in existence;
- Identify and reach new powerful partners outside the political sphere that would contribute to the implementation of the Convention (e.g. neighbouring countries, multilateral bodies, NGOs);
- Raise awareness of the Convention within the private sector and civil society;
- Take advantage of new social networks and other online tools, such as blogs, web sites, social media, etc, to raise awareness of and increase the visibility of the Convention;
- Identify, illustrate and disseminate good practices on cultural diversity and initiate the creation of a 'label' for public, private and civic endeavours on cultural diversity; and
- Map the priorities identified for each country (e.g. ratification, implementation, visibility, cooperation) to help in creating strategies for implementation of the Convention.

Future Actions

The following actions were discussed and agreed on as short- and mid-term goals of the U40-network:

- Publish the compilation "Mapping Cultural Diversity – Good Practices from Around the Globe" in November 2010;
- Create a U40-Website to include general information on the network, its action plan and member profiles with long term goals of establishing: a database of good practices, an online library of relevant documents in the context of the Convention, and an interactive tool for targeted discussion on cultural diversity. The site is envisioned as a worldwide "go to" knowledge resource platform on cultural diversity;
- Initiate a strategic workshop to sharpen the profile of the network in order to foster the network for long-term activities and to facilitate public relations and future cooperation;
- Form specialized subgroups on, for example, the Convention and Cultural Rights, Media and Visibility, and Fundraising;
- Prepare further meetings to reinforce knowledge exchange between the U40-Fellows (e.g. Inter-American Meeting, Toluca, México (May 2011); Learning Journey, Brazil (October 2011));
- Continue knowledge transfer and Fellow expertise by organizing meetings and conferences to share experiences, ideas and projects, publishing on specific issues of the Convention, fostering the realization of the Compendium in new countries, and discussing and realizing specific research projects on topics like culture and development (MDGs); and
- Expand the Network in currently underrepresented regions (i.e. recruitment of additional Arab and Asian experts, the latter with the support of the network and contacts of the Asia-Europe Foundation.)