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Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization



Diversity of  
Cultural Expressions

# 12 IGC

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## INTERGOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEE FOR THE PROTECTION AND PROMOTION OF THE DIVERSITY OF CULTURAL EXPRESSIONS

Twelfth Session  
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### INFORMATION DOCUMENT

This document has been prepared by 14 civil society representatives\* from 6 regions and including international organizations. It presents a call for mobility and support for translation costs in order to facilitate the active contribution of civil society organizations in the work of the governing bodies of the Convention. It also provides updates on current consultations among civil society organizations. The authors are responsible for the choice and presentation of the facts contained in this Report and for the opinions expressed therein, which are not necessarily those of UNESCO and do not commit the Organization.

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They have been tasked and invited by a larger group of civil society organisations TO ensure a coordination among civil society to facilitate their exchanges in the preparation of the 12 IGC.

## 1. BACKGROUND

1. In accordance with Article 11, the Conference of Parties (CP) and the Intergovernmental Committee (IGC) have created robust avenues for civil society to participate in the Convention processes. Since the entering into force of the Convention in 2007, the governing bodies have taken over 20 decisions and produced different working and information documents on the role and participation of civil society in the implementation of the Convention<sup>1</sup>. In particular, since 2013, at its fourth ordinary session (June 2013), the Conference of Parties invited the Committee to continue its work on the assessment of the involvement of civil society in the implementation of the Convention at the national, regional and international levels, including in the work of the statutory bodies of the Convention (**resolution 4.CP 13**). At its ninth ordinary session (December 2015) invited Parties inter alia to support, financially or otherwise, the increased participation of representatives from civil society organizations in the meetings of the governing bodies while asking the Secretariat to :

- inscribe on the agenda of each of its meetings an item on the role of civil society in the implementation of the Convention, inviting civil society, under that agenda item, to present an activity report (in writing and/or orally);
- organize a working session between civil society representatives and the Bureau, prior to the meetings of the governing bodies, to address, inter alia, specific issues of importance to civil society;
- work together with civil society representatives to develop and implement indicators to better measure the involvement and scope of civil society engagement;
- encourage participation of civil society representatives at meetings of the governing bodies, as observers, including professional organizations and/or individual practitioners working in the cultural and creative sectors whose interests correspond to the agenda of the meeting (**decision 9.IGC 9**).

2. At its 10th session, while requesting Parties, the Secretariat and civil society to continue exchanging on and developing mechanisms to strengthen the participation of civil society in the implementation of the Convention, the Committee:

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<sup>1</sup> DCE/16/10.IGC/6 – page 2

- invited to organize a biennial forum for civil society preceding sessions of the Conference of Parties and
- called for civil society to present a report (written and/or orally) on the activities carried out in 2017

3. In order to implement **Decisions 9.IGC 9 and 10.IGC 6** and on the basis of the 1st Civil Society Forum discussions and decisions, civil society representatives participating in the 11<sup>th</sup> session of the Intergovernmental Committee presented a first ever global report on civil society activity, regional and thematic reports to the Committee and held a debate on a sustainable system of governance for civil society to regularly inform and collaborate with Parties and the Secretariat at national, regional and international levels, as well as within the governing bodies of the Convention.

4. The meeting mandated a Steering Committee composed of 2 representatives of each regional group and 2 representatives of International Organisations to propose to the next 2005 CSO plenary in December 2018 "a vision and alternative models of governance, codes of governance and structure for civil society coordination to act within the governing bodies of the Convention".

## **2. CALL FOR FUNDING SUPPORT TOWARDS A BALANCED REPRESENTATION OF CSOs IN STATUTORY MEETINGS AND PREPARATORY ACTIONS**

5. In line with **decisions 11.IGC 5 and 11.IGC 6**, the upcoming IGC will be an opportunity for CSOs to engage further with Parties around the important issues, follow up on the first civil society reports and to meet together to develop a structured, democratic and balanced mechanism to enable civil society to work together even more effectively in the coming years. This will be in the interests of both CSOs and Convention Parties.

6. To achieve this objective, civil society representatives call once again on all Parties and all interested organisations to help us to ensure we have as balanced a representation of CSOs.

7. As noted in the Activity Report submitted in December 2017, many CSOs, particularly from the Global South, have a limited capacity to participate in the work as actively as they want.

8. In its recommendation #3, the Report suggests two measures for Parties:  
"Following IGC decisions in 2015 and 2016, Parties can facilitate CSO participation in the work of the governing bodies by:

- a) each party supporting the presence of at least one CSO representative at the meetings of the governing bodies. CSO representatives should be selected through transparent procedures and CSOs should be invited to nominate delegates;
- b) supporting the organization of civil society's ongoing contribution by financially contributing to a governance mechanism that would support a global advocacy network and support a coherent and representative CSO contribution to the work of the governing bodies."

9. Therefore civil society representatives renew their previous appeals to Parties to use their best efforts to follow up on these suggested measures in view of all future meetings of the governing bodies, notably the upcoming 7<sup>th</sup> Conference of Parties in June 2019.

10. Civil society, notably organisations based in the Global North and international organisations, have already been invited to make similar efforts by facilitating the presence of partners representatives from traditionally underrepresented regions or sectors, if their structure and resources permit. The result of this call has allowed to identify funds and/or co-funding for at least 5 civil society representatives from the South to participate in this 12<sup>th</sup> session of the IGC.

11. Civil society representatives will submit to the next Conference of Parties proposals for a joint mechanism for a mobility fund to be identified in dialogue with the Convention Secretariat in light of recommendation #3 of the first civil society global report. This mechanism could be a permanent multi-donor and multi-stakeholder fund, with appropriate governance mechanisms, to support the participation of civil society representatives, in particular from traditionally underrepresented regions or sectors, at meetings of the Convention governing bodies.

12. In conjunction with the mobility challenge to ensure a balanced participation of civil society from all region to the governing bodies of the Convention and their active participation in the preparation of civil society reports and inputs to the Governing bodies, civil society representatives will also submit to the next Conference of Parties a proposal to support translations costs during civil society meetings to be held parallelly to the official agenda of statutory meetings and at distance. Civil society may also consider to submit a formal request for support in the establishment of a permanent platform for dialogue within civil society and in the frame of the 2005 Convention, also based on existing mechanisms in other relevant UNESCO Convention.

13. Civil society representatives who are at the initiative of this call believe that the future of the Convention, its innovative approach for participatory governance and its effective implementation, lies in increased cooperation between the Parties, Secretariat and civil society. They once again congratulate Parties for the recent commitments towards this objective.