

2nd MEETING OF MINISTERS OF CULTURE OF THE COMMUNITY OF LATIN AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN STATES (CELAC)

August 21, 2014, Caracas, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela

Declaration of Caracas

We, the Ministers of Culture and Heads of Delegation, gathered in Caracas, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, on August 21st, 2014, on the occasion of the 2nd Meeting of Ministers of Culture of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), aware of the historical significance of this meeting, for purposes of moving forward on the path of regional integration through culture, preserving cultural heritage, promoting a culture of Peace and fostering a productive cultural economy, the eradication of poverty and sustainable development, hereby:

1.- Recognise that the creation of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) is a milestone in the history of the region, as it has become a regional entity with the mission of moving forward towards political, economic, social and cultural integration of Latin America and the Caribbean;

2.- Reaffirm the validity of the agreements adopted by the Heads of State and/or Government of Latin America and the Caribbean enshrined in the Declaration of Caracas at the Founding Summit of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), dated December 3rd, 2011, in Venezuela, the Declaration of the 1st Summit of CELAC, adopted on January 28th, 2013, in Santiago de Chile, the Declaration of Havana, and the Special Declaration on Culture as a Promoter of Human Development, adopted in the 2nd Summit of CELAC, held in Havana on February 28th and 29th, 2014, and the 1st Meeting of Ministers of Culture of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States held in Paramaribo, Suriname, on March 14th and 15th, 2013;

3.- Ratify the respect for cultural diversity characterizing Latin American and Caribbean identities, as multiethnic, multicultural and multilingual societies, which constitutes the basis for cooperation and the actions aiming to the achievement of regional integration which, in accordance with the spirit and principles of CELAC, shall be constructed upon the basis of respect for pluralism and the sovereign right of each of our peoples, as well as the full respect for the rules and principles of International Law;

4.- Ratify the role of culture as driving force contributing to sustainable development, being one of the pillars for the eradication of poverty and the decrease of social inequalities in Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as a substantial part of the process towards the achievement of more equal and better suited societies to face the current challenges, as stipulated in the Special Declaration on Culture as a Promoter of Human Development, approved in the 2nd Summit of CELAC.

5.- Commit ourselves to take the necessary steps to include Culture in the Post 2015 Agenda and work to fulfil the goals established therein for this sector. For purposes of constructing the Post 2015-SDO Agenda, we endeavour to prepare the First Report on Cultural Policies, Programmes, Projects and Services developed by CELAC member states which may strengthen and broaden the connections between cultural diversity, social inclusion and sustainable development so as to favour exchanges, cooperation actions and research.

6.- Favour the inclusion of culture in the Social Agenda of CELAC aimed at fostering the tasks associated with Social Development and Eradication of Hunger and Poverty.

7.- Recognise the importance of promoting regional cultural projects and policies contributing to the creation of cultural mechanisms conveying respect for life, human dignity, pluriculturality, the principles of justice and tolerance, and conveying rejection of violence as constituting elements in the construction of a culture of peace in accordance with the Proclamation of Latin America and the Caribbean as a Peace Zone.

8.- Reaffirm the need to guarantee the exercise of the cultural rights of our peoples, strengthen the role of the States in such endeavour and promote cooperation in this connection.

9.- Agree to study the preparation of regional projects enabling the financing, promotion and protection of cultural undertakings, including the promotion of synergies among public and private institutions that favour social-cultural projects, such as cooperative association, craftsmen associations, Small and Medium Size Enterprises engaged in culture, among others.

10.- Favour the strengthening of the existent procedures and mechanisms for the protection and preservation of the Cultural Heritage of our countries and welcome the creation of new regional mechanisms contributing to the fight against the unlawful traffic of cultural and natural heritage, as well as the preservation of traditional goods and knowledge which constitute a part of our Latin American and Caribbean identity. In this context, we support the sovereign right of all the peoples in their struggle for the reinstatement of their cultural property, as it is the case of the Kueka Stone, which is an original heritage of the Venezuelan Pemon people.

11.– Likewise, bearing in mind the noticeable cultural heritage harboured by Latin America and the Caribbean as heirs of ancient and rich civilizations, we urge to double the efforts that are being undertaken within the framework of UNESCO in the negotiations of the Subsidiary Committee of the “Convention on the means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of

Cultural Property of 1970” whose amendment shall render effective the fight against the illicit traffic of cultural property.

12.- Welcome the recent UNESCO listing of Qhapag Ñan –Andean Road System- as World Heritage considering it is a current roads work with special value and significance for the physical, cultural, social and economic integration of South America.

13.- Recognize the actions taken by the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela for the recovery and custody of 56 Costa Rican archaeological pieces of the highest cultural value, as a concrete example of the will of States to respect and work for the recovery of the cultural heritage of our people.

14.- Reassure our will to work in the construction of a cultural information system for all CELAC member states based on the successful experiences within the region.

15.- Celebrate the 25 years of sustained will which led to the Fora of Ministers of Culture from Latin America and the Caribbean, and the contribution of such experience to our current and future tasks.

16.- Acknowledge the need to deploy common efforts to channelling the potentials of emerging technologies towards the broadest access to contents reflecting our identity.

17.- Welcome the proclamation of the International Decade of Afro Descendants as an initiative to fight discrimination and we commit ourselves to participate in such initiative by fostering activities promoting equality of rights, fighting all forms of racism and intolerance and guaranteeing the wellbeing of society. We support the actions of afro descendant communities and, outstandingly, those undertaken by CARICOM to obtain reparation and compensation of the damages caused by slavery worldwide.

18.- Favour the synergies which may be achieved in the development of the CELAC Cultural Agenda among the various regional and sub-regional integration mechanisms and organs of Latin America and the Caribbean.

19.- Take note with satisfaction about the upcoming opening in November 2014 of the “Néstor Kirchner” Building, Seat of UNASUR in the city of Quito, Ecuador, which certainly will contribute to promote the consolidation of a functional institutional framework for the South American and regional integration process.

20.- Decide to strengthen relations and devise actions and develop joint positions before the international bodies in which CELAC member states participate.

21.- Ratify the creation of a Working Group, initially made up by the CELAC Quartet (Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador and the Pro Tempore Presidency of CARICOM), Suriname and Venezuela -hosts of the 1st and 2nd Meetings of Ministers of Culture- where the countries may join, should they deem it advisable, considering its open nature, so as to develop the Cultural Action Plan presented at this meeting, which shall be approved by the Ministers of Culture and, later on, a report shall be submitted to the 3rd Summit of Heads of State and/or Government of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States to be held in Costa Rica in January 2015.

22.- Express our deepest gratitude to the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela for hosting and organising the 2nd Meeting of Ministers of Culture of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States as we move towards our third meeting in Havana, Republic of Cuba, in September 2015.

23.- Welcome the offering of the Plurinational State of Bolivia to host and organize the 4th Meeting of Ministers of Culture of CELAC, to be held in 2016.

Caracas, Venezuela, August 21, 2014.