



IV Meeting of Ministers of Culture
Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC)
6 and 7 October 2016, Santa Cruz - Plurinational State of Bolivia State
Declaration of Santa Cruz

The Ministers of Culture, Heads of Delegation, gathered at the IV Meeting of Ministers of Culture of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), in the city of Santa Cruz de la Sierra of the Plurinational State of Bolivia; recalling the important contribution to Latin American and Caribbean integration initiated by the Forum of Ministers of Culture of Latin America and the Caribbean and the role of culture in the sustainable development of our peoples, we declare:

1. We reaffirm the principles and objectives contained in the Caracas Declaration of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) in December 2011, and its role in advancing our political, economic, social and cultural integration. Recognition of CELAC as the ideal space for the expression of our rich cultural diversity and reaffirmation of the identity of Latin America and the Caribbean;
2. We confirm that culture is a major pillar for the eradication of poverty and the reduction of social inequalities in Latin America and the Caribbean, as part of the process towards achieving more equitable societies better prepared to face the current challenges, incorporating strategies for sustainable development in harmony with nature;
3. We reaffirm the status of Latin America and the Caribbean as a zone of peace, where different cultures coexist in a dynamic process of dialogue that strengthens Latin American and Caribbean identity;
4. We ratify the importance of human right, to culture, recognized in international instruments as well as the commitment of States to adopt the necessary measures to progressively achieve the full realization of this right;
5. We ratify respect for the cultural diversity that characterizes the Latin American and Caribbean identities, while multi-ethnic, multicultural, and multilingual societies, which constitute the basis of all cooperation and actions aimed at achieving regional integration, which is the spirit and principles of the CELAC, built on the basis of respect for international law, equally recognize the values of all its peoples and nations, as well as its important contribution to the cultural heritage of mankind;

6. Commitment to the eradication of all forms of discrimination and racism in all our societies through policies, strategies and mechanisms to enhance the cultures of nations, indigenous peoples, multiethnic and Afro descendants communities for “Living Well” in harmony with nature;
7. We reaffirm our support for the proclamation of the United Nations in December 2013 the International Decade of African Descent (2015 to 2024) with the theme: "African descent: recognition, justice and development". We will continue to work on implementing its Program of Action;
8. We reiterate the commitment made at the IV Summit of Heads of State of the CELAC to present a proposal for United Nations Declaration on the promotion and full respect of human rights, of individuals and peoples of African descent.
9. We ratify the commitment to implement policies to promote the cultural tourism that create jobs, promote local culture and products within the framework of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda;
10. We recognize that culture is a prime tool for integration, and for addressing the challenges that our countries are facing. In this sense we recommend the exchange of artists, creators, and professionals that enriches our cultural diversity and strengthen regional integration;
11. We affirm the importance of the cooperation among the CELAC member countries for regulating the import and export of cultural property as well as to implement the respective laws to prevent entry into our territories of all cultural heritage property from another country that has been subject to unlawful export or reported as illegal appropriation.
12. We reaffirm the right of all peoples in their fight for restitution of their cultural property on this purpose we decide to form an Ad Hoc Working Group headed by Bolivia and Ecuador to present an updating proposal of the 1970 Convention to be submitted to the national coordinators before the next Summit of Heads of State of the CELAC.
13. We recognize the experiences presented by all the Member States on the subject of restitution of cultural property and we urge the Pro Temporary Presidency to generate the mechanisms for the exchange of information and best practices that facilitate the devolution processes of these cultural properties.

14. We reaffirm the need to adopt appropriate measures to promote and preserve the traditional knowledge of the different expressions of the indigenous peoples, Afro-descendant as well as other cultural origin communities;
15. We reaffirm the importance of the link between the UNESCO's Culture Regional Working Plan and CELAC's Cultural Action Plan, and we embrace the support of UNESCO's Regional Cultural Office to share the results of both plans;
16. We reiterate the commitment made at the IV Summit of Heads of State of the CELAC to continue strengthening the agreement of the States of the Community and speak out as a region where appropriate; as well as to presenting where possible, joint and agreed initiatives;
17. We sincerely thank the hosting of the IV Meeting of Ministers of Culture of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) by the Plurinational State of Bolivia and congratulate them on a job well done.

Santa Cruz, Bolivia, October 2016