



DECLARATION

XVIII FORUM OF MINISTERS OF CULTURE AND OFFICIALS IN CHARGE OF CULTURAL POLICIES OF LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN Santa Cruz de la Sierra – Bolivia 21 and 22 July 2011

The Ministers and Officials in Charge of Cultural Policies of Latin America and the Caribbean, having met in the city of Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia on 21 and 22 July, 2011, during the XVIII Forum, consider:

That, from Bolivia, land of snow-capped Andes mountains and Amazon plains, we propose looking toward a common horizon at the dawn of this second decade of the XXI century, and travel through a new time following in the footsteps of the fertile cultures we have inherited, to write a common present and future with creativity.

That it is necessary to deepen our dialogue on a culture of peace in the context of the current world crisis.

That, it is urgent to reduce and eradicate relationships of inequality and domination that have led to situations of ecological deterioration, poverty, marginalization, and violence, which compromise the manifestations of diverse cultural groups in our communities.

That an opportunity for transformation has arisen with proposals from communities capable of configuring horizons of change from a diversity of viewpoints, and acknowledgment from cultural diversity and the communities capable of constructing horizons of change from the "Living Well" intercultural space.

An opportunity for transformation has arisen with proposals from the communities in the region that promote processes of interculturality and acknowledgement of cultural diversity. We acknowledge the importance of the Sumak Kawsay/Suma Kamaña, or Living Well, in addition to other traditional knowledge for the development of inclusive cultural policies that result in the de-colonization of our peoples, and in harmony with the environment and the planet.

- a) That we acknowledge the value of cultural policies in providing for the full development of creative capacities of citizens, and the need to advance on plans and programs that contribute to both culture and social cohesion, the construction of peace and pluralism.
- b) That we must advance upon processes to disarticulate all existing forms of domination and exclusion and develop policies of inclusion without discrimination based on race, gender religion, age, sexual orientation and others. Generate awareness about the shared past of the peoples of the Americas, and foster the projection of a future that will find them integrated in diversity. In this sense we must delineate strategies that lead to the construction of more just, equitable and fair societies, capable of living in harmony with Mother Earth.



We declare that:

1. It is essential that our societies guarantee the exercise of cultural rights based on principles of equality, fairness and social justice, by revaluing, protecting and promoting cultural heritage and collective traditional cultural knowledge, to strengthen regional integration.
2. It is necessary to ensure and promote intercultural diversity and dialogue, and respect among persons and peoples, through the recovery of the historical memory, peaceful coexistence, and integration for a better world.
3. We must design inclusive cultural policies, strategies and mechanisms that respect the identities of our peoples and guarantee the realization of their cultural rights, to strengthen the full exercise of democracy.
4. It is important to promote and preserve traditional cultural knowledge of the diversity of peoples and ethnic origins, by articulating individual and collective rights within a framework of democratic principles.
5. The exercise of sovereignty and self-determination of our peoples contribute to projecting new models for change and cultural initiatives for harmonic co-existence at the international level.
6. The application of unilateral coercive measures with extraterritorial effects, contrary to international law, against countries in the region, is an obstacle to the right to development, the full exercise of the cultures and the integration process.
7. It is important to ensure the protection and promotion of tangible and intangible cultural heritage of the region, promoting the various expressions of art and creativity, establishing mechanisms for prevention, conservation and restoration of cultural heritage, through actions leading to the prosecution and punishment of actions or acts that damage, destroy or traffic in cultural heritage.
8. We acknowledge that chewing the coca leaf is an ancestral cultural manifestation in Bolivia, and we reiterate our commitment to full respect of the rights of the indigenous peoples and the preservation of their uses and customs.
9. It is necessary to strengthen cooperation and financing for the development and implementation of cultural projects identified as priorities in the region, through agreements with international organizations and the regional integration of different countries.

10. It is necessary to encourage and support an exchange among countries of cooperation, experience and technology, through training, cultural research and transfer, as well as the free circulation in each of its territories, cultural and creative industries, cultural managers, cultural goods, costumes and traditional folk instruments necessary to carry out artistic activities, by means of legal procedures to facilitate the establishment of agreements between member countries.
11. We must assist and promote all cultural and artistic expression that strengthens cultural identity, language, historical tradition, institution, territoriality and worldview, where cultural diversity is the basis of multiculturalism as a tool for cohesion, social harmony and balanced among all peoples and nations of our planet.
12. We firmly support the efforts being made by the countries that are promoting the *Qhapaq Ñan*, Andean Road Project, both before international cooperation agencies and among Forum member countries, in order to achieve the preservation of its Exceptional Universal Value as Heritage of Humanity.
13. In order to achieve a continuous relationship of convergence and coordination, negotiation and response to the cultural challenges of the region, a Pro Tempore Secretary for the Forum of Ministers of Culture of Latin America and the Caribbean should be strengthened as an institution.
14. We thank UNESCO for its support of the Forum's work, through the Regional Office for Culture in Latin America and the Caribbean (ORLALC), and in particular the support it has provided from the technical secretariat, the latter being convinced that strengthening this forum will propitiate the appropriate forms of cooperation with other bodies at regional and international levels.
15. We reaffirm our commitment to work on implementing the Convention for the Protection of World Cultural and Natural Heritage and the Convention for the Protection and Promotion of Cultural Expressions, as international instruments of particular value to cultural management in our countries.
16. The Ministers take note of the declaration of the Cancun Unity Summit, which took place on 23 February 2010, by means of which the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) was formed. This meeting makes a call to the co-chairs of Chile and Venezuela of the Unity Forum to consider that in the future this mechanism (the Meeting of Ministers of Culture) form a part of the CELAC system.
17. The Ministers join the 40-year celebration of the Regional Center for the Promotion of Books in Latin America and the Caribbean, CERLALC, an inter-governmental organism linked to UNESCO, which has been a fundamental stakeholder in promoting reading and libraries, promoting books and defending copyrights in the region.

18. We congratulate the Ministry of Cultures of the Plurinational State of Bolivia for its outstanding performance as chair of the Pro Tempore Secretary of this Forum, which has facilitated the achievement of very important results. We welcome the cultures of Suriname as Chair of the Pro Tempore Secretary for the upcoming 2011-2012 period.

Santa Cruz de la Sierra, 22 July 2011