



Presentation of the world report "Rethinking cultural policies" at the Centro Cultural Kirchner (Buenos Aires)

The Challenges of Cultural Diversity and Freedom of Information in the Digital Era.

On November 29, in the framework of the UNESCO Observatory Villa Ocampo, the Communication Sector and the Culture Sector of the UNESCO Regional Office in Montevideo carried out a panel entitled "The Challenges of Cultural Diversity and Freedom of Information in the Digital Era "at the Centro Cultural Kirchner(CCK). The panel was attended by:

- Minister Hernán Lombardi (Minister of Public Media and Contents System of Argentina)
- Mr. Joao Luiz Silva Ferreira, former Minister of Culture of Brazil.
- Mr. Joao Caldera Brant Monteiro Castro (Brazil), member of the Interoices Board
- Mrs. Vanina Berghella, Executive Director of the Argentine Journalism Forum (FOPEA)
- Mr Hugo Achugar, Head of the Cultural Policy Program of the University of the Republic of Uruguay
- Mr Guilherme Canela, Regional Advisor for the Communication Sector (UNESCO)
- Mr Frédéric Vacheron, Cultural Specialist for the Southern Cone (UNESCO)

This activity is part of a new cooperation program between the Public Media and Contents System of Argentina and the UNESCO Villa Ocampo Observatory which aims to disseminate in the public media the fundamental axes of the protection and promotion of cultural diversity embodied in UNESCO cultural conventions and in the universal legacy of Victoria Ocampo.

"Each one is allow to think in his/her own way but no one has the right to twist or disfigure the thought of others," said Victoria Ocampo. This is the reason why SUR magazine constituted a meeting point, a confluence space where the most diverse and antagonistic voices agreed to differ. Faithfull to its legacy and to UNESCO's mandate, the

UNESCO Villa Ocampo Observatory develops these initiatives that reflect its role as a think tank for the promotion of cultural diversity and freedom of information.

During the event, the UNESCO 2015 Global Report "Re-thinking Cultural Policies" was presented. The report analyzed the results of ten years of implementation of the 2005 Convention Promotion and Protection of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions. During the debates a special emphasis was placed on the links between cultural diversity and freedom of information as well as the challenges of artistic freedom.

The experts agreed on the need to reposition the 2005 convention as a fundamental tool for international cooperation in the face of unprecedented changes in the media landscape. The free flow of information continues to be of vital importance. The exchange of new ideas and different perspectives allows diverse voices to be heard and, as a result, helps to ensure an adequate environment for sustainable development.

With the increase of digital networks and platforms, the protection of online freedom is equally relevant. Access to media channels and a wider range of options does not necessarily imply that the media content available through these channels is freer, and a greater number of platforms does not necessarily guarantee the diversity of cultural content and expressions.

Artistic freedom is also a core theme. As the report "Re-thinking Cultural Policies" states restrictions on artistic freedom and access to artistic expressions generate significant cultural, social and economic losses, deprive artists of their means of expression and work, as well as creating a unsafe environment for those who are engaged in the arts.

As the Norwegian filmmaker Deeyah Kahn stated on the occasion of her appointment last November 21st as the first UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador for Artistic Freedom and Creativity:

"Art has the extraordinary capacity to express resistance and rebellion, protest and hope. It provides a vital contribution to any functioning democracy"

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